

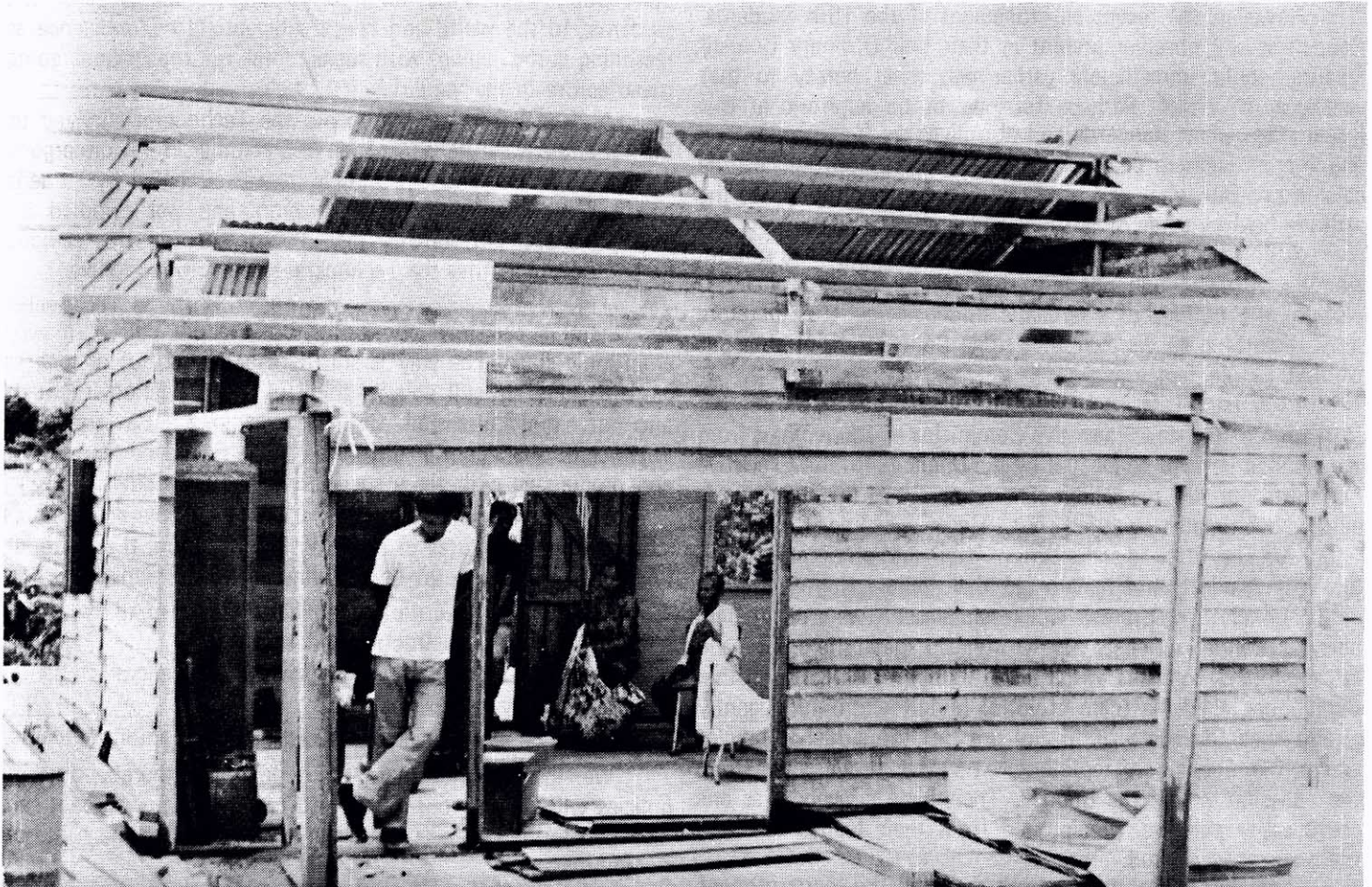


SINGAPORE TECHNOCRAT

VOL. 4 NO. 1.

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*"...and the sky shall be my
roof."*

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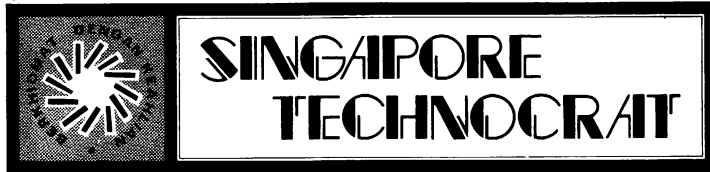
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THE TASEK UTARA TRAGEDY

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Reflections From The 1st OCM

It is not unoften for newly-elected Councillors to step into office with an extra heavy sense of well-being and pomposity or an overwhelming desire to strive for the Union; fledging Councils tend to be optimistic and euphoric.

However, the recent enthronement of the 15th Students' Council as any observer present in their first Ordinary Council Meeting could immediately gather was sheer heresy to that well-accepted belief. Perhaps for one to be euphoric at this initial stage when standards and objectives are far from reached and over-enthusiasm or optimism, if without precautions can be calamitous. But what will surely result in a catastrophe was the attitude held by some of our new leaders.

A cohesive Council is the first prerequisite for the smooth running of the Union administrative machinery and of course also for the buildup of a dynamic student force. It is therefore most disturbing to discover that some Councillors are oblivious of that simple fact.

Each 1st O.C.M. as constitutionally laid out would see the formation of the new Executive Committee — 10 members from the Council have to be elected by the Council into the Executive Committee to run the Union. The nominations this year was as before, legitimately carried out. However some Councillors flared up in utter dissatisfaction over the nominations and blatantly alledged and denounced their fellow Councillors for voting blindly. The protests which had ensued were not merely petty but more seriously would indicate that inflexibility and incompatibility prevails within the Council. Discrediting other Councillors, alledging them of voting blindly and unintelligently is also sheer disregard of the integrity of the student body of whom the Councillors represent. At worse, it will also strain the cohesion within the Council. Their basic grievances as one could easily perceive, precipitated from their failure to attain the posts they desired.

Such petty disputes obviously indicate the segregation of the Council to at least two distinctive cliques. It is customary for candidates contesting on common grounds during election to group themselves to make up a party. There is therefore this inevitable tendency to retain this "party-concept" after successful entry into the Students' Council. The possibility of Councillors to be intriguing or pledging solidarity with former party members can be very real.

On the contrary, mere utter contempt is no remedy. Those dissident Councillors when denouncing their fellow Councillors for retaining this so-called "party-concept" proved themselves as advocates of this concept. They should also beware that such attitudes can do much to aggravate the situation.

Students are wary and weary of the past; we have little within our memory lane that can entrall us — we are in ardent hope to see the emergence of a new frontier. However the picture painted by some of our new leaders gave us only a dismal if not a pessimistic outlook of the future. Calibre, coupled with direction must be the hallmark of all student endeavours. It is thus shameful for us when so much time and energy is wasted in trivialities. The Union cannot survive when her representative body, the Students' Council is to crumble in disintegration and disarray.

Towards A Better Campus Media

The need for an efficient and responsible campus media is a very real and urgent one. In a large community as our campus, where 7,000 students are busily pursuing 7,000 dreams, there is a need to gather all these youths, unify them on a common ground and to, together, strengthen their ideologies and social senses and, to battle for theirs' and their fellow countrymen's deprived rights. A campus paper is, in a way, a useful weapon to wield in this situation. Besides providing the necessary light into the darkness of our social environment, more potent still is its' function to amplify the voice of the students; to the world and hence substantiate our existence as reasoning human beings with social moral, not robots undergoing manufacture in the campus.

And so with that reason has the Technocrat survived to this latter stage. In its' short span of 3 volumes, it has undergone a myriad of trials and tribulations, it was strangled by student apathy, has struggled with oppression, and was crippled by feeble management, but as long as students on this campus harboured some strive the Technocrat shall continue to live.

This is the beginning of the 4th Vol. of the Technocrat and there is certainly no doubt that we are still at a very embryonic stage. The way is still dark and long but as long as students here are still able to think of their social environment and not simply just stick to their pace in the Rat Race, the Technocrat shall continue to live, being moulded, represented and progressing with these social-conscious individuals.

To ensure that the new Vol. of the Technocrat metamorphoses and matures in a responsible direction, the Editorial Board has outlined a set of guidelines designed below.

- 1) To be a critic on a liberal standing/All criticisms to be constructive and sincere.
- 2) To function as closely with the general students' body as possible.
- 3) To inculcate greater social awareness among students.

We, the Editorial Board, are hopeful that the above set of policies will channel our paper into one that every student can read with pride and every outsider with respect to the name of the Polytechnic.

We are also doubly hopeful that all those in authority will listen to our cries and take all words with the utmost of sincerity and seriousness and not cast our paper aside and render our students as immature and unpracticable, for that we are not.

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THE TASEK UTARA TRAGEDY

Controversies are a part of the very complex life of a Collegian. The most recent talked-about issue was the involvement of the Union over the eviction of the squatters in Tasek Utara sweeping the student body with unprecedented impact. Whatever may be the positive results arrived, the awakening of the student body from indifferent hibernation was perhaps the surest.

Whether justifiable or not, the Union in her commitment over this issue has certainly wasted little time and no one can deny that the swift actions employed deserve special merit. A Press statement, together with a protest note to the Malaysian High Commissioner was quickly drafted out. And on the morning of 18th Sept. 1974, a demonstration was staged at the Malaysian High Commission. Not to lose the momentum, a campus-wide campaign to collect financial aid for the squatters followed. It should be well noted that little time could then be spared as the fate of those squatters was then standing wobbly at the edge of a precipice and what lie in store for them may be too dreadful to predict. The situation was then a grave and serious one.

MONEY-RAISING CAMPAIGNS

However, it must be admitted that few students actually have a clear understanding over this issue before they had pledged support to the cause. Undoubtedly, the response of the students during the class-to-class money-raising rallies was spontaneous. On the contrary, this was only of slight indication that students were in favour of the Union's stand, considering the emotion stirring talks delivered by the Union leaders and the trail of questions and criticisms left behind. Emotions gave way to reality, inducing much inquisitiveness rather than mere acceptance of the facts earlier related to them.

Unmistakably, this whole issue together with the Union's stand evolved into a complicated controversy overnight. It is undeniable, that the Students' Union, considering the tight time factor, had done her best to enlighten the students over this issue before appealing for their support. However as one may gather, the majority of the students were still lacking of a clear understanding of the

reasons behind the involvement of the Union in this issue. The dilemma and confusion we were entangled in was of such serious perplexity that immediate remedy is imperative.

It has been argued that the Union had been too unthinking and impetuous in her actions. One can easily misconceive that the Union was merely keeping up with the present trend of radicalism so inherent of youth today, without sound knowledge of what she was standing up for. Furthermore, the fact that Tasek Utara is only a short distance from the causeway could have tempted the Union to be involved, and perhaps, this temptation have been so over-whelming that the Union may tend to overlook the implications of involvement. There certainly was much that may have led us to believing that the Union had not meticulously considered the implications.

IMAGE

This whole issue is of course not lacking any political if not racial overtones. The image of the Union in the eyes of the public may suffer a calamitous blow if her cause is distorted and not made clear to the public. The obvious facts that the roots of this problem is on the other side of the boundary, that the poverty problems in Singapore was far from solved and that serious political implications, detrimental to the rapport between Singapore and neighbouring Malaysia should have placed the Union in a most uncomfortable and vulnerable position right from the beginning. However, this did not present any obstacle to the Union. On grounds of humanity SPSU took up this cause with full force.

The apparent result was the swift impression of a Union, myopic unrealistic and unwise. Some indignantly and rigidly condemned the Union for making such decisions, although it must be admitted

that she had seldom been more decisive and determined. Whether the Union was actually unwise or not in establishing that stand can be largely debatable. But the dilemma we were caught in could have been avoided if only we had looked in greater depth into the whole issue.

SUBMISSIVENESS

More than often have we been conditioned to think that we are not to poke our noses into the affairs of other countries. The Palestinian crisis, the ugly oppression which prevails in Vietnam, South Korea or Chile received little attention from us — we had chosen to remain indifferent even though we are aware that such injustices exist. Even in our own society, we shun taking matters into our own hands and we feel that society will surely function smoothly if only we do as we are told. It is not surprising therefore that Singaporeans are highly reputed for their submissiveness; we loved being led by our noses. These few uncomfortable facts have led us to believe that the problem in Tasek Utara is solely a domestic affair of Malaysia and that the ruling elite there will surely act to solve the problem. Seen in this light, there is therefore no account for Singaporean students to "meddle" with such affairs. It will certainly be lamentable if our concern for humanity is to be confined by such artificial barriers, such as differences in nationality, race or religion.

It is therefore not merely to sing praises for the Union to assert that her involvement in this issue, based on the humanitarian aspect alone is all justifiable. Simple intuition should tell us, that is, if we still claim that we have not degenerated to nothing more than mechanical digits.

CAPITALIST

The squatters' problem was certainly perpetuated from the capitalistic

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SPSU Councillors — lending a hand.

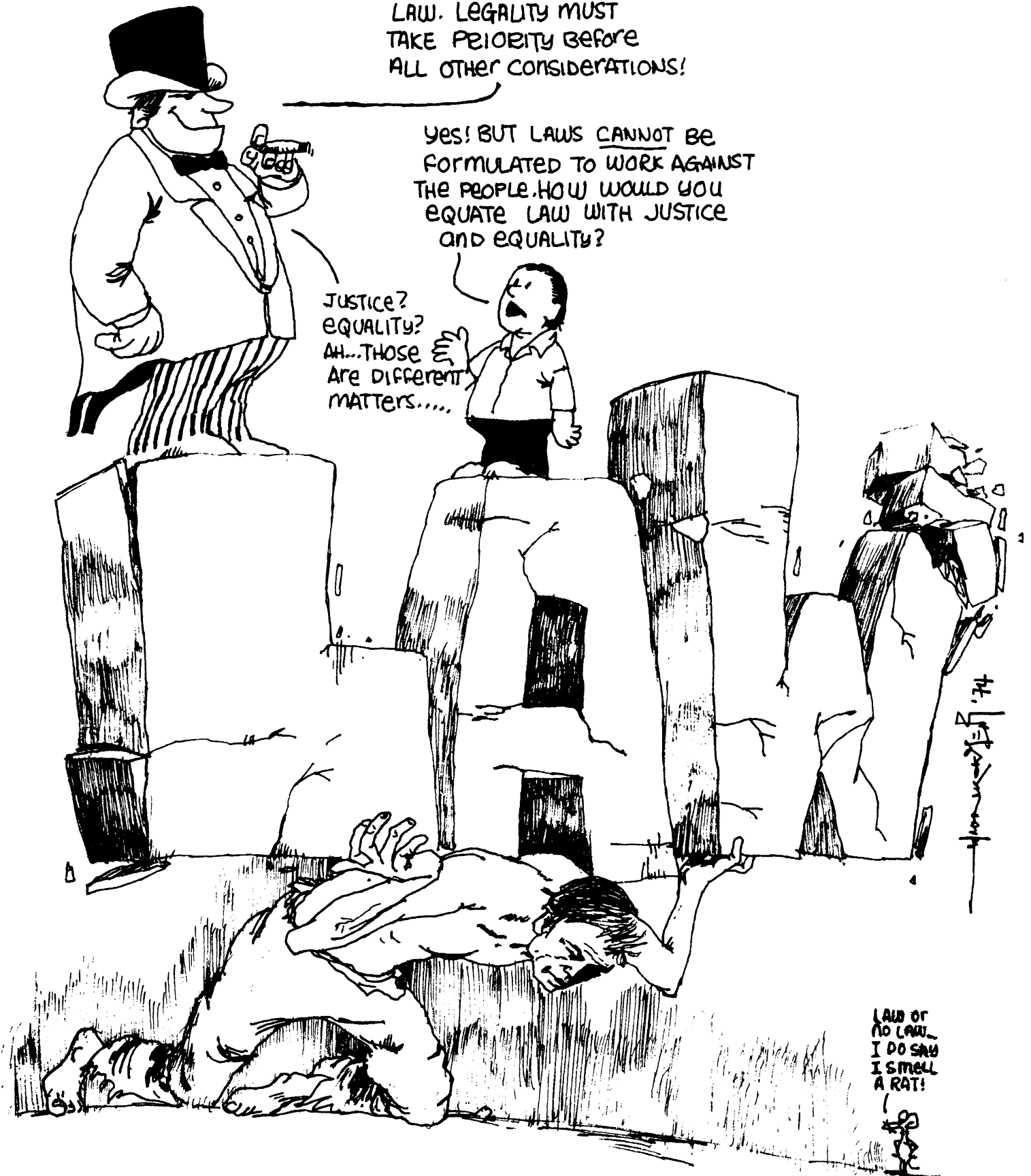


"We want land!"

NOW, EVERYBODY
IS BOUND BY THE
LAW. LEGALITY MUST
TAKE PRIORITY BEFORE
ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS!

Yes! BUT LAWS CANNOT BE
FORMULATED TO WORK AGAINST
THE PEOPLE. HOW WOULD YOU
EQUATE LAW WITH JUSTICE
AND EQUALITY?

JUSTICE?
EQUALITY?
AH...THOSE
ARE DIFFERENT
MATTERS....



VOTE OF NON-CONFIDENCE ON EX-COs

The new-born 15th Students' Council was to undergo their first acid test in the Annual General Meeting when some of their Executive Committee members were greeted with a vote of non-confidence. It was beyond dispute that such a motion being considered when the 15th Students' Council had not even received inauguration and had hardly started work was somewhat inconceivable and even imprudent. Nevertheless, that motion to consider a vote of non-confidence on some of the 15th Ex-co members was duly submitted and had to be allotted into the agenda for the meeting.

Whatever the allegations on those Ex-co members concerned, were to be, this motion should have placed the present Councilship, if not the Union members in a most uncomfortable position and the psychological effects on the Ex-co members, as President Soh Chee Keong had mentioned will be most unhealthy and detrimental. On the contrary, it cannot be denied that such a motion should present a challenge to the new Council. Much as there may be an undesirable effect on the impetus and enthusiasm of our new leaders, this motion should best be seen as a test on the calibre of the existing leadership.

GRUDGES

However, what actually happened during this very important function of the Union was lamentable. Mr. Chuang Pinky, the proposer of the motion (the seconder, Mr. Chong Wing Sum was absent) had from the very beginning presented himself in a most obtuse manner. He had persistently withheld from revealing the names of the Ex-co members he had in mind (the motion was merely phrased as 'some Ex-co members') and then maintained that the motion should be ready to be put to voting. The only charge brought up was that 'one of the Ex-co members was unable to address himself in front of the students during the campaign rallies', his 'cowardice' thus proving him a person of fragile leadership. What was most ridiculous was that Mr. Chuang's reason for refusing to specify which were the Ex-co members he had in mind was that he feared that 'personal grudges' might be built between himself and those Ex-co members. The several requests from the Chairman and subsequently an appeal from the President himself to reveal the names were apparently dismissed as merely obtrusive. Perhaps the most deft move he made was to withdraw the motion he had submitted on the grounds that the consequences of revealing the names, that is, creating 'personal grudges' will be too heavy a burden to bear. That Mr. Chuang's initial motives were detached of any considerations for the serious implications inherent of such an issue was unmistakable. Jeers inevitably arose from the much disturbed members of the house. A procedural motion immediately followed, reading:— 'I, Simon Lim move that this house censure Mr. Chuang Pinky, for his unbecoming behaviour in trying to create confusion in the 14th A.G.M. by proposing a motion of non-confidence on some Ex-cos, notice of which was duly given, but not naming the Ex-cos in question during discussion on his proposed motion and further that this house appoints a Committee to consider disciplinary actions against him', seconded by Mr. Hoe Lye Soon.

COWARDLY

It was at this juncture that Mr. Chuang returned to his senses. His ignorance of the massive implications of such a motion suddenly turned into stark awareness; he changed his mind about withdrawing the motion, deviated from the stand he had only minutes ago so persistently maintained, consented to reveal the names and lastly begged for the procedural motion to be withdrawn. It may or may not be that Mr. Chuang Pinky had actual intentions of 'creating confusion' in the house but he had in surety, manifested some inexplicable internal mechanism which generates confusion within him. It was abundantly clear that Mr. Chuang Pinky had already lost half the battle.



Simon Lim.....Politically motivated?

What followed was even more distressing than the first uncalled for episode. The Executive Committee members on trial were none other than the Social Secretary, Mr. Dominic Chang and the Hon. Gen. Secretary, Mr. Simon Lim. Mr. Dominic Chang was alleged to be too cowardly to have the courage to face the crowds of students during the rallies. Mr. Chuang, however, as the house learnt after Mr. Dominic Chang had asserted, had not drawn the right facts as he did not know that the Social Secretary was then suffering from throat troubles and was therefore unable to address the students at that time. Mr. Dominic Chang by explicitly speaking out to the house had further proved false those charges brought against him. With such feeble and unsolid accusations, the motion of non-confidence on Mr. Dominic Chang was clearly defeated.

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Union Crisis

— students bogged down in irrationality

What that may be nothing more than a clown show to the not-so-serious-minded student, the 2nd Adjourned Annual General Meeting had, in reality, marked a shameful episode in the Union history. To any concerned student, it was certainly no clown-show, amusing though it may be for a meeting of such importance to be conducted in such dismal disorder and chaos.

The already tensed atmosphere in the P.E.C. exhibition hall, where the meeting was convened, reached a crescendo when a vote of non-confidence was thrown on Mr. Simon Lim, the newly inaugurated Hon. Gen. Secretary of the 15th Students' Council. This was the second time he was subjected to such a vote, the first being defeated in the 1st Adjourned A.G.M.

IN VAIN

The house had earlier rescinded the motion of censure on Mr. Chuang Pinky, adopted in the 1st Adjourned A.G.M. The motion to rescind as expected found little resistance and it was evidently clear that the vast majority of the students had turned up especially for this certain issue. It was also indisputable that these large groups of students who dominated the house, were reluctant to participate in or listen to any debate over this issue and that their decision to rescind the motion of censure was made long before the meeting. This was palpably manifested when the proposer of the previous motion of censure, Mr. Simon Lim endeavoured in vain to relate to the students of what had actually took place in the previous meeting which had propelled

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VICTIMIZATION and INTIMIDATION

Anywhere, anyplace,
 In life's stormy rat race
 You will find,
 Minds of many kinds.
 Some with ideals sweet and fine,
 Some with charm, no less divine.
 But WE who are here
 Must watch, wonder and ponder
 Why life's throng moves and gears
 Itself towards its own blunder.
 Leaders come, and leaders go
 But hail, no one seems to know.
 But pause and ponder,
 Look around, move and wander.
 What do you find?
 Yes, intimidation and victimization
 Of potential leaders.
 What do you have to say readers?
 Which cause and circumstances foretell?
 And public utterance compel
 After probing deep on thoughts, words and deeds
 Of a society and environment which does not heed:
 The pleas and the cries,
 The sane talk to mimics.
 And the objects oft mentioned
 Retaliates with scornful, merciless victimization.
 And hope during the course to leave its intimidating
 Effect, sunken on the shore of the victim's mind: ECHOING
 And GLEAMING like a mirage in the desert
 And HURTING like the glare of the sun: UNHEARD!
 The ECHO continues to sound.
 But DO YOU or DO YOU NOT hear this sound?
 Whether YOU BELIEVE IT or BELIEVE IT NOT, just LOOK
 AROUND!

— TOM & THUMB —

Clarification

This serves to clarify that the following names, Mr. Richard Lim Puay Hong, Mr. Tan Hee Kok, Mr. Mok Siew Meng and Mr. Tan Lee Khiang was included among the list of recipients for the SPSU Certificate of Recognition as reported in the last issue (July/August) of the Technocrat by mistake. We, therefore wish to tender our humble apologies to the above students concerned for the embarrassment and inconveniences caused.

QUOTE:

Your real education begins after the school doors have closed behind you.

At school you merely learned what everyone has to know.

DEAR FRIENDS, WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE LIST OF PASSES FOR THE SESSIONAL EXAMINATIONS? YET SOME WHO HAVE NOT EVEN SQUASHED AN ANT ARE COMPELLED TO SLIDE DOWN THE CHUTE.

Victimization is a disgrace which all try to conceal — a skeleton in the cupboard Students sporting long hair are most eligibly qualified for threats by lecturers. It would be a great injustice to terminate a lad's future by just a matter of a few inches of hair. A person's heart is not reflected by the amount of hair, but rather on stability and concern for others. More serious crimes are more often committed by the conventional four by two's. For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds. Lillies that foster smell far worst than weeds.

Some lecturer confess to flaws in their tutelages but a majority will evade the truth. It is during such sensitive times that arguments may lead to something more, between the Lecturers and students. Students either fear their lecturers like thunder or respect them with deep sincerity. Victimization is sometimes abstract in nature as one can only sense it, but, if proof is available the Union should be enlightened.

Numerous injustices have been committed yet only a fraction detected. Let Hercules himself do what he may. The cat will mew and the dog will have his day.

Many students regard a lecturer as a supreme almighty for the moment..... Some unscrupulous students may even "Kow-Tow" to a lecturer just to get into the tutor's good books. Humans are fallible, and base-spaniel students who shower words soaked in honey usually receive spotlight treatment.

Once upon a time a Head of Department adopted a pupil to be his loving God-son and it turned out that he was the Chairman of a minor society. At this society's FOC tea-party, a motion of non-confidence was slotted in. Immediately this Chairman rushed to his adopted Daddy and almost burst into tears on his God-father's shoulders. The Head of Department acted irrationally and made day-light threats to the people who penned the petition. He scared the breath out of the whole course by persistent remarks about promotion, failure and ejection from the Polytechnic all to be decided by him. He! A scientist who is considered to be a man of higher intellect and maturity doing such a low down act Deep versed in books and shallow in himself. The bookful blockhead, ignorantly read with loads of learned lumber in his head. Such a person has abused his status and could not be regarded as a man of principle. Power is the grim idol which the world adores. Practice what you preach, as an ounce of practice is worth a pound of preaching.

"Man is the source of all evil
 Man is also the source of all good
 But where is the source of all sources?
 Who is the King of the Kings?
 Who is the God of Gods?
 The tiger will age
 The mountain will erode
 The storm will calm
 The volcano will slumber
 Who claims the throne?
 Nobody!"

Tom & Thumb.



The Minamata Disease is a very important if not typical case of Japanese pollution resulting in severe bodily symptoms involving many persons, and it is one of the prototype cases of pollution displaying typical social and political response patterns. As such it has a vital place in the history of environmental pollution in the Japanese experience.

In the beginning of May, 1956, several patients displaying very severe neurological symptoms were carried into the Chisso Factory Hospital in Minamata City, a small industrial city in the south west portion of Kyushu Island. These patients were trembling, shouting like barking dogs and struggling violently day and night. The director of the hospital, Dr. Hosokawa immediately recognized that this disease was quite new, as yet unknown, and thus this group started an investigation. (Fig.1)

Investigations into the early stages of the disease indicated that there were some symptoms that could be recognized as common to the typical patient, i.e. the concentric constriction of the visual field, disturbances in sensation, loss of speaking ability, loss of hearing ability, disturbance in motor coordination as well as tremor and convulsion especially in the limbs. (fig. 2) Common in their diet was fish from Minamata Bay. The only epidemiological specific condition in Minamata Bay was the contamination of by industrial waste from the Chisso factory.

The Chisso Minamata Factory is one of the largest, as well as one of the leading chemical industries in Japan, producing chemical fertilizers, PVC resins, plasticizers and various organic chemicals. The factory had been discharging its waste into the shallow Minamata Bay without any treatment for a long time, and the bay was contaminated by heavy metals and metaloids.

At the time fifty patients were discovered and of them 17 have died. Since that time the number of "officially recognized" typical patients have been increasing gradually and by July 1970 the number had reached 121 among whom 46 had died. The official recognition of patient is very restricted to a limited number of cases, in consideration of the compensation problem. The whole range of pollution and related damages has not been completely investigated yet.

Before the outbreak of symptoms in human beings appeared, similar symptoms were observed in cats in the same fishing village with the cats ultimately destroying themselves by jumping into the sea. The fishermen called the phenomenon cat suicide, but unfortunately the serious sign of impending disaster in the environment was neglected.

The rather simple cause and effect relationship in this particular pollution disease problem was the accumulation of trace quantities of methyl mercury into the marine biomass which passed through the fish to the human consumers thereby poisoning them. However it took more than 6 years since the disease was first discovered until the time when the cause was determined, in spite of the serious efforts of local practitioners and a research group at the Kumamoto University. The largest obstacle in the search was the total lack of cooperation on the part of the Chisso Company in relation to process information. The company even tried to hinder the investigations by propagating silly contradictory theories as to the cause. Further the complicated multiplicity of the contamination of the aquatic biomass as a result of various industrial wastes from the factory also was a factor in slowing down resolution of the cause question.

In the meantime, during the summer of 1958, congenitally transferred cases of the Minamata Disease were discovered. Babies were borned with brain damage caused by organic mercury pass-

ing through the placental barrier into the baby system while yet unborn. These children cannot live without diapers even in adolescence. They have not mental world and in their crying existence they have been condemned to a sub-human existence by the dumb inhuman forces of modern society.

The life of fishermen which was once stable, based on abundant fish was suddenly changed to the hardships of grinding poverty as a result of the contaminated fish. In this small town the power of the factory was so very strong that the voices of the fishermen in protest were completely ignored.

In 1959, mercury was discovered in large concentrations in fish and in the organs of dead patients. Further animal experiments with organic mercury confirmed the organic mercury theory as the animals developed the same symptoms. After much hesitation and bewilderment, the fishermen asked the factory to compensate them for damaging the fishing grounds and the fish products. The company refused to even negotiate at first and then, after some violence, a final settlement was proposed by local politicians. The company paid \$100,000 to the fishermen in Minamata City without any reference to the disease or related compensation. In the mean time the pollution spread north through a new waste discharge system and several new patients were discovered on the northern shore area of the Shiranui Sea and as a result of this a great deal of social unrest was created region wide. Spontaneous and violent demonstrations by fishermen occurred against the coercive and manipulative attitude displayed by the company. Some 3,000 fishermen rushed into the factory grounds and destroyed the office. It was through this violence that the Minamata Disease came to be known throughout Japan. The fishermen were blamed by all social classes in Minamata City for the violence, and were prosecuted in criminal court. In the meantime the company was never

questioned in relation to its legal responsibility vis-a-vis the polluted aquatic environment and its pathological effects.

During the 1956-60 period, the company made every effort to avoid responsibility, by stating silly refutations and denying that they were discharging organic mercury in their waste water. A few authoritative chemists also stated various theories in refutation of the work of the research working of the problem at Kumamoto University. Among them was a professor Kiyoura of Tokyo Institute of Technology who presented a paper about the Minamata problem, to the 1st International Conference on Water Pollution Research, that supported the official company position. This man is still a famous scholar in the environmental pollution field and he continues to support industry even today.

The action and attitude of the government was also very strange in the investigation of the disease and in the relation to pollution control. When the group of experts from the Ministry of Welfare prepared a report supporting the organic mercury theory, the group was suddenly dissolved and a high official in the ministry tried to suppress the report.

In Kumamoto, the fishermen were driven to a corner and the situation nearly exploded. The committee for making arrangements in relation to compensation, which also included the prefectural governor, cut down on the fishery damage compensation amounts to the level of one-twentieth of the original proposal and a \$300,000 final settlement was arranged at the end of 1959. For the Minamata Disease victims a very low solatium agreement was forced upon them. For example, death was to be compensated for by the payment of \$800, for each adult victim the com-

pensation was set at \$280 and or each child at \$80 per year. This agreement has the following infamous clause: "When the factory waste is discovered not to be at fault, the whole agreement shall be dissolved: if the factory waste is shown to be responsible for the disease, the victims will not request any further compensation." The factory, at the time it concluded this agreement, already knew that the waste water from the acetaldehyde plant was toxic since they had induced similar symptoms in cats by feeding them waste water. Officially, the Agency for Economic Planning took over investigation of the Minamata Disease in 1960. After secret meetings were held in that year the group dissolved leaving no report and no trace. On the other hand, the organization or managers of the Japan Chemical Industry Society, hired a world famous authority in epidemiology, Professor Emeritus Dr. Tamiya of the University of Tokyo, and organized the so called Tamiya Committee calling it an impartial committee. This committee also disappeared after secret meetings. These actions, however, were very effective in hiding the truth concerning the Minamata Disease from the common people, for the time being.

The once forgotten Minamata Disease, however, appeared again in 1965 this time in a new location, at the mouth of the Agano River in Niigata. This discovery of a second disease brought to light that there had been no administrative action taken to stop environmental pollution. The source of the pollution was assumed to be the acetaldehyde factory of the Showa Denko Co. located on the upper reaches of the Agano River, but the company refused to recognize the conclusions of the official research group since these investigations were in their early stages and disadvantageous to the company. The patients of the second disease started civil action in the

courts about June of 1967 against the company asking for compensation in relation to bodily damage and this became the first large civil suit brought against polluter in the history of modern Japan.

In 1968, when the Niigata patients visited Minamata to express their sympathy for the victims of the first disease there started a citizens organization which wished to support and act with the victims in an attempt to combat a long history of negligence and discrimination of the victims in both Minamata and Kumamoto. Meanwhile, a forced solatium contract arrangement was set up by the Ministry of Welfare which divided the victims organization into two groups, one for the arrangement and the other for preparing for a civil suit to force compensation. In June the minority group of Minamata victims started legal action in spite of great social pressure to stop the process, in that small industrial city. The supporting citizens group in Kumamoto started the publication of a monthly paper "Kokuhatu" (Indictment) and tried to investigate the whole picture of the Minamata Disease for the average citizen. Their publication as well as the related investigation should be evaluated as one of the finest efforts at combating pollution in the history of pollution research in Japan: The extent of the pollution was largely elucidated by their work and action.

In September 1971, the final decision was announced in Niigata District Court in relation to the patients vs. Showa and Denko. The court recognized the cause and effect relationship and the responsibility of the company, but the sum of compensation for the patients was low in comparison to the irreversible damage and pain caused by the disease. As previously stated, the recognition process in relation to the Minamata patients had been a very biased one quite in favor of the company in consideration of the economic burden the company would have to bear in the compensation process. Even the epidemiological investigations of the local distribution of the patients was inadequate except in the early stage of research. It was naturally assumed that there may be undiscovered patients. Since 1970, the efforts of the patients along with their supporting organizations have been useful in turning up new patients that had been previously undiscovered. As a result of this effort, 31 new patients have been officially recognized in 1971. These new patients are possibly only a small fraction of the existing victims which were damaged by the toxic wastes laden by organic mercury pollution from the Chisso Co. Perhaps more than 10,000 inhabitants received more or less irreversible damage from the activities of Chisso, but to estimate the entire pollution damage range would be impossible.

The Chisso Co. has refused to negotiate with any of these newly found

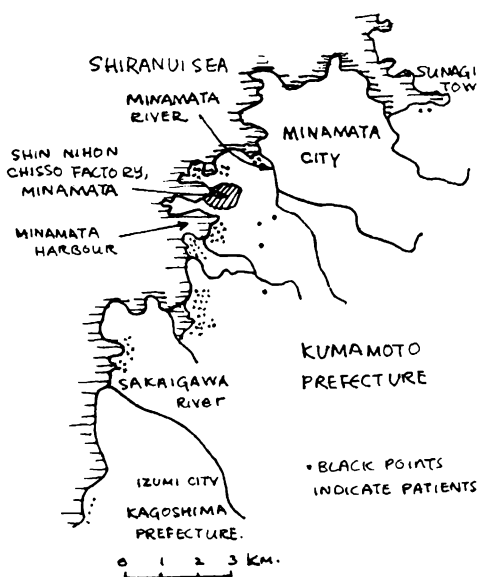


FIG. 1 — LOCAL DISTRIBUTION OF PATIENTS.

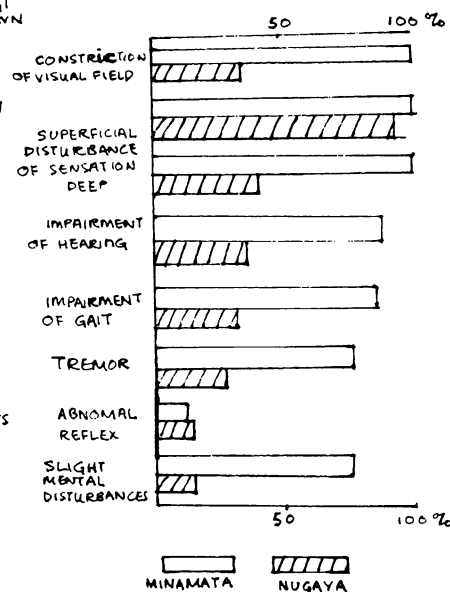


FIG. 2 RATE OF OCCURANCE OF TYPICAL SYMPTOMS

- WHAT IT MEANS TO BE OLD IN SINGAPORE

different homes) for lunch — rice, vegetable, fish (ikan kuning), plain soup and occasionally meat, for tea — coffee and biscuits and for dinner — the food served is similar to the lunch.

From the above, the quality of the food certainly must be improved. Furthermore, there were complaints that the amount of food served per person is insufficient. This happens mainly because there is a lack of funds to cater for better food. In homes like Yew Tee and Dragon Lotus, which are recently taken over by the Council of Social Service, \$1.50 was allocated to every aged or for his or her daily meals.

The circumstances leading to aged landing in Homes are many-fold, one of which is due to the financial situations of the aged's children. Most of the aged's children belong to the lower income group (from the survey, the statistics are 64.3% of the aged's children are unskilled workers, 21.4% are unemployed). Hence restricted by economic resources, the elders will tend to be neglected in order to provide for the younger generation. Whose fault is it that the aged's children alienate the elders? Poverty? If so, why is there poverty in this society?

The prevailing generation gap also contributed greatly to this problem of the old being neglected. This obnoxious gap exists because of the different set of values different generations have. The ideals that our grandparents have now reflect the social thinking 40 to 50 years ago. Another factor which enhances the generation gap is the lack of communication between the young and the old due to the fact that each is pre-occupied with his or her own activities. For instance, with rapid industrialisation both husband and wife go out to work. When they return home, they are too tired with the day's work to communicate with their children. On the other hand, the children, so burdened by their heavy school work and activities, find little time to talk with their parents. Lack of communication between the young and the old.

Urban renewal and building of HDB flats fostered the isolated nuclear family and separate the older generation from their adult children because the limited space in HDB flats does not give the old folks privacy especially when the family is a large one. The old folks have to seek accommodation in old folks' Homes. What can be done? Advocate family planning? Stop at two or redesign the flats to allow more room for each family?

Many of the inmates in homes are of poor health which has been contracted as a result of hardwork in their younger days. Because of economic reasons these people delay or avoid altogether seeking medical care, leading to more serious consequences. When they become old and sick, family members are not available to care for them (because they have to work for a living) and they are sent to the aged homes which neither provide them adequate medical services.

From the survey, it was found that 33.7% of the inmates are single with no dependents. Most of these single aged were immigrants who had come to work here. In dockyards, construction sites they toiled under the sun and rain to help Singapore to become the 4th largest port and to speed our modern high rise buildings. These people who had contributed much in building up modern Singapore are now old, disable or in poor health as a result of industrial accidents or through strenuous work. What have they got in return for their hardship? Their meagre earnings has prevented them from setting up a family and hence leaving them without any dependents now.

Conclusion

In every home visited, there is a long waiting list of applicants showing that more and more aged are opting for the Aged Homes.

In the SCSS newsletter 'Rapport (April 1974 issue), it says:-

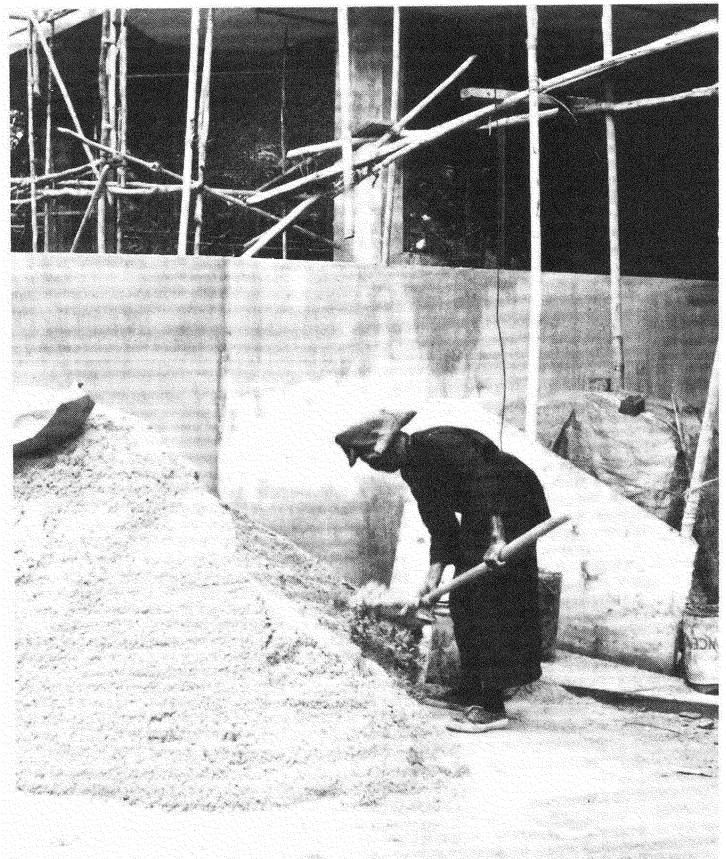
"The voluntary organisations affiliated to the council which have been set up to meet the needs of the aged sick have practically no vacancies.....

These voluntary organisations are also limited by the lack of resources and manpower and are therefore unable to expand their services in the light of this dilemma, perhaps *more govt. grants* and other support could be considered to enable them to expand."

This editorial was reported in the Straits Times but so far the Social Welfare Department has not make any response or any indications on what to do to this call for aid.

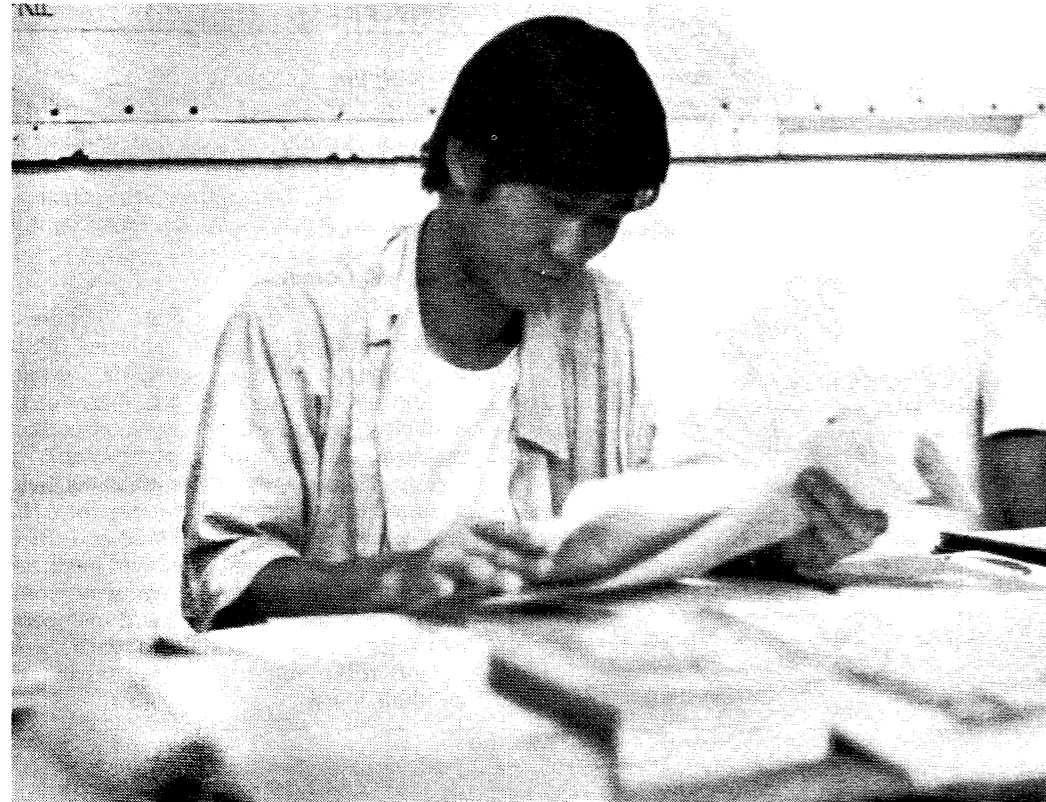
What has the government really done for the old folks? Besides setting up Woodlands Home providing grants to homes and giving monthly public assistance to these old folks who have proved themselves to be unable to work and have no dependents; have they thought of improving their conditions further? If the govt. are sincere to look after the aged, they should uplift the living conditions in Chinatown Kongs room, allow the old folks living in the One-room flats free accommodation since most of them are in financial difficulty, they should increase the amount of social welfare aid to the poor old folks. What our govt. lack is initiative in welfare work — at present most of the welfare work is started by voluntary organisations. We are not advocating that government be solely responsible for solving the aged's problem. The government, the voluntary organisation and the public should work jointly to tackle these problems. After all, "old age is a question that concerns us all — most of today's young will be the aged of tomorrow." One fact we emphasize is that the aged are part of the society. They must not be dumped into the isolated homes but should be integrated in the community. What causes their negative attitude towards life is that they feel unwanted, segregated from society. If they were to live in the community and were helped to perform meaningful roles in the society, they should not feel so depressed. Hence old folks should be housed within the housing estates instead of the rural areas like Woodlands.

Viewing the inadequate health services in the homes, it is concluded that the setting up of a special institution with adequate medical facilities and staff to attend to the disabled and chronically sick old folks is highly necessary.

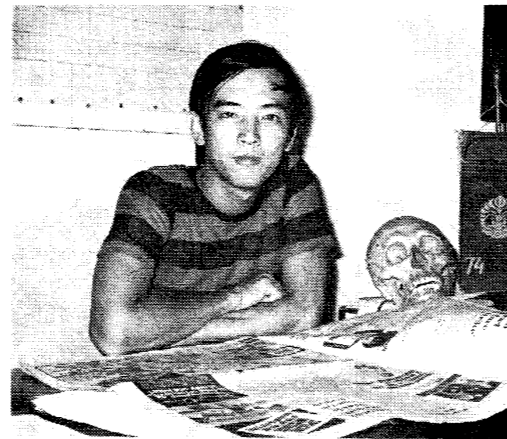


Is it labour shortage or welfare shortage?

THE 15th STUDENT'S COUNCIL



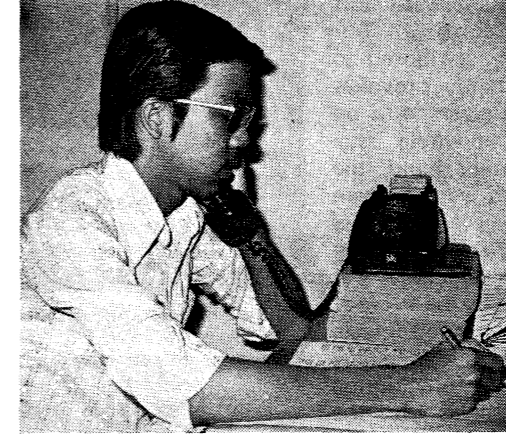
Soh Chee Keong, President. "Two way communications most important".



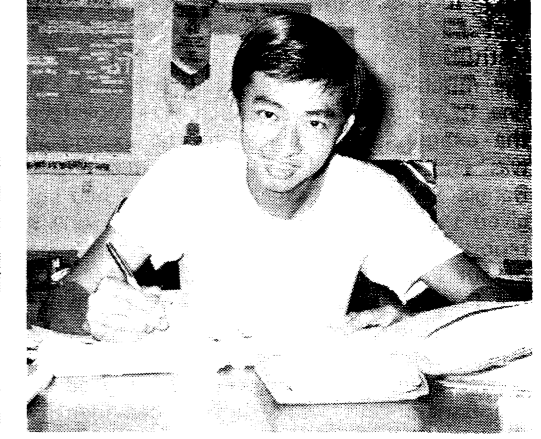
Chew Chin Seng, Vice-President.



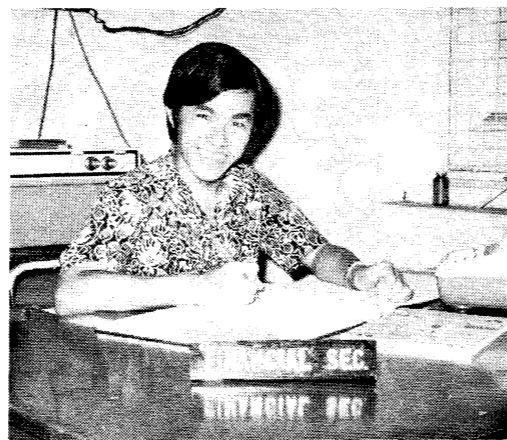
Simon Lim, Hon. Gen. Secretary.



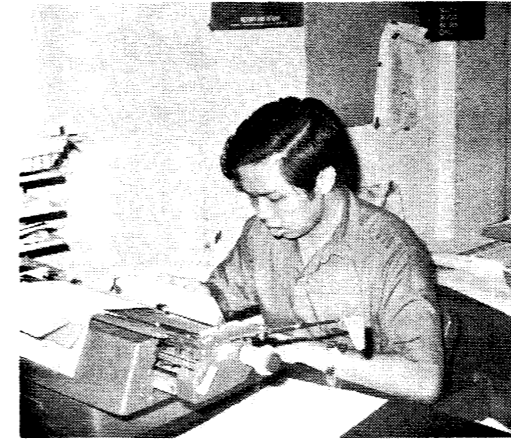
Dominic Chang, Social Secretary.



Wee Seng Cheong, Asst. Hon. Gen. Secretary.



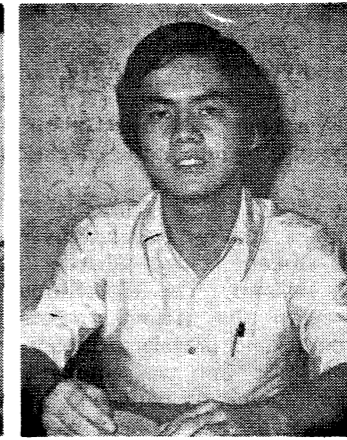
Nelson Neo, Financial Secretary.



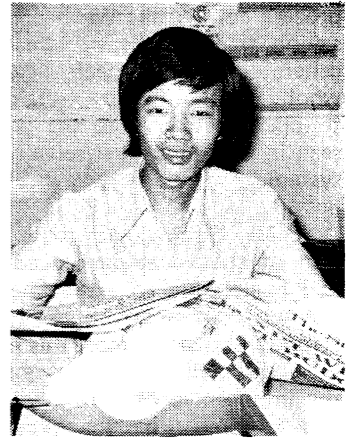
William Lee, Publications Secretary.



Wong Wing Kwong, Councillor.



Philip Chia, Councillor.



Patrick Goh, Councillor.

Of Private Vietnams And Student Apathy — The New President Speaks

Following the defeat of the vote of no-confidence on some of the 15th Ex-co members in the 1st Adjourned A.G.M. which had long menacingly threatened the cohesion of the Council, the new President, Mr. Soh Chee Keong in his inaugural address to the house stressed that whatever policies the present Councilship is to adopt is only of secondary importance, students' support and participation being the most important.

Mr. Soh pointed out, 'Many Councillors in the past have been too pre-occupied with their personal conflicts, perpetuated from selfish ends.' He observed that past Council meetings when Councillors are supposed to decide on issues on behalf of the 7,000 members had more than often degenerated to nothing but 'private Vietnams'. "Grudges were built up everywhere, and in this context", Mr. Soh added, "the Union leadership was partly to be blamed for the members' indifferent attitude towards the Union's calls."

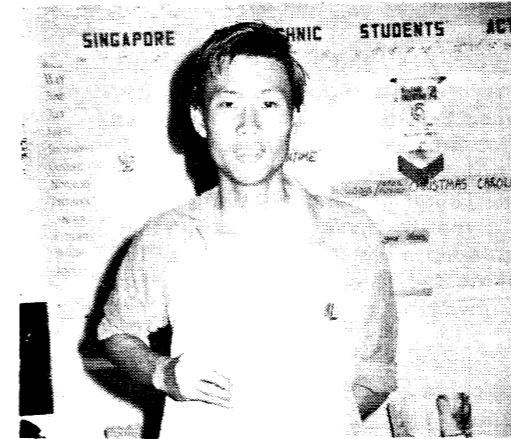
"The 15th Students' Council", Mr. Soh said, "would therefore propose the setting up of a Representative Council consisting of class representatives. Societies, with their smaller memberships are also not to be overlooked as an effective means for grass-root implementations of policies. Through these means, a more effective two-way communication between members and leaders can be realised." Mr. Soh has realised through his long experience in the field of Union work, the effectiveness of direct face-to-face talks rather than impersonal communication through notice-boards.

Concerning societies, Mr. Soh criticized them for their past unconstructive role in the Union and he described the Affiliated Societies Coordinating Committee meetings as 'frustrating'.

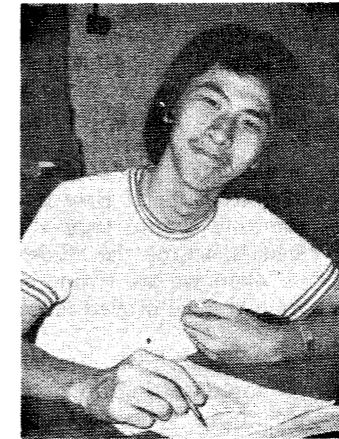
See page 12



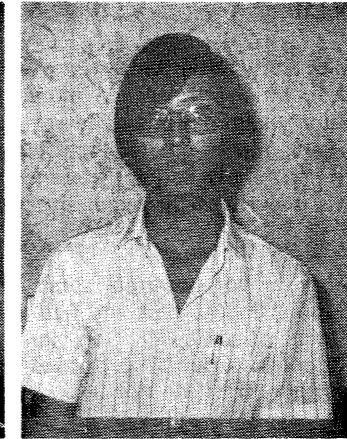
Tan Guan Teck, Union House Secretary.



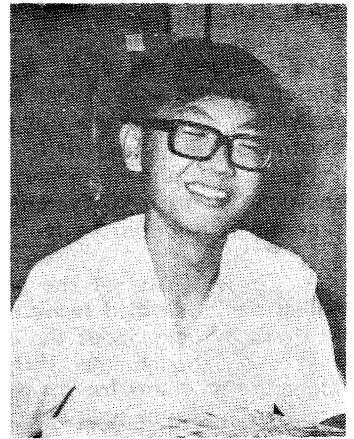
Teo Cheng Huat, Asst. Financial Secretary.



James Lee, Councillor.



Lim Cheng Hai, Councillor.

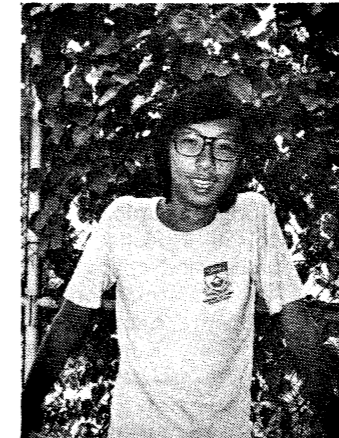


Lim Boon Hua, Councillor.

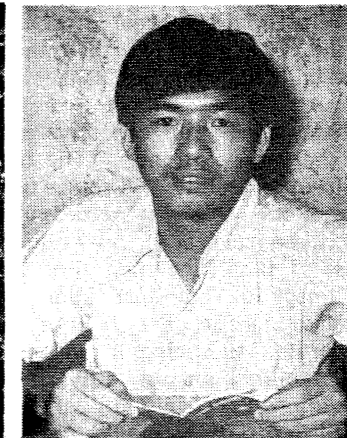


Tan Eng Lock, Welfare Secretary.

NOTE:
The pictures of Councillors, Mr. Daniel Ng, Mr. Francis Wu and Mr. Philip Chan are not available.



Ng Kheng Soon, Councillor.



Tan Ah Teck, Councillor.



Jeff Lee, Councillor.

From page 10

INTERVIEW

In a later interview with our new President, it was learnt that Mr. Soh believed that much of the bad image of our institution, in the eyes of the public was greatly attributed to the mischief of the Press. Mr. Soh said, "It certainly provokes one to wonder why so much Press coverage was given to us on the examination leakage, to the extent that the whole issue was sensationalized and exaggerated. On the other hand, the Bangla Desh week which the Union had launched was not even given the publicity it deserved. When one survey the past Press reports and the several occasions of misreporting and distortion of our Press statements, it will not take long to conclude that the Press is out to harm our image. It will certainly be futile if we are to depend only on the Press to project our good image. I believe that it is through reaching out to the public, personal contacts with them as we had achieved so successfully during the Bangla desh week that we can identify ourselves with the public and show to them the authentic Poly student. Community welfare projects do not merely help to shatter the high ivory tower image of students but will greatly serve as educational process for us all. We hear so much of people criticizing us, saying that the heavy stress on technical know-how had degenerated us into mechanical robots. This may or may not be wholly true but there certainly is a need for students to learn to open their eyes to the problems facing society. The Union, seen in this light must serve as the missing link in the educational system."

Mr. Soh agreed that 'student apathy' had always been part of the vocabulary used by student leaders whereas little had been done to eradicate it. He said, "The 15th Students' Council has high hopes that with the setting up of the Representative Council this common and prevalent disease will be eliminated to a great extent." Mr. Soh was emphatic on the importance of a two way communication between students and Union, using the proposed Rep Council and Societies as channels.

RAT RACE

"Student apathy", as Mr. Soh reiterated, "is chiefly caused by the educational system which stresses so much on individual performance and passing examinations. The rat race existing in our community is very much created artificially. People are dehumanized and self-centredness and indifference to social problems is cultivated. This is perhaps the exact situation prevailing within our campus."

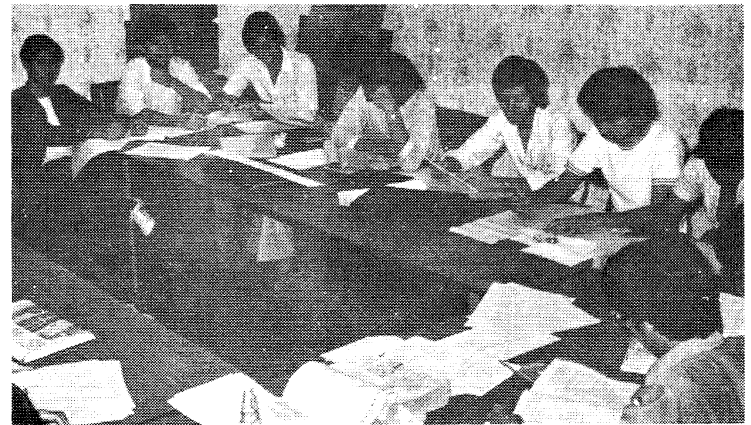
On the issue of the games tour for potential sportsmen which had bedevilled many a Council in the past and had even at times brought about the downfall of some, Mr. Soh clarified that even though the 15th Students' Council proposed the scrapping of grants for the games tour, they are not in any way against the idea of such a tour.

"However, a large sum of money have to be spent on this project and the Council sees a greater need in improving the sporting facilities which will surely benefit a larger number of students rather than serving the elite only. Furthermore a greater pool of sportsmen can be built up." Mr. Soh said.

Mr. Soh being aware that the games tour can serve as an incentive for members to train harder, mentioned, "The basic principle behind sports is to build up a healthy and sound body and mind. Incentives should come only as a distant secondary consideration. It would certainly be tragical if our students could no longer see the purpose of sacrificing their time and energy towards bettering the image of our institution and Union without receiving some materialistic gain. If it is true that our sportsmen have degenerated to seeing incentives as primary importance then, it is the fundamental duty of the student leaders to rectify the situation. I certainly hope that this is not true. Nevertheless, it is still our duty to break down any such selfish mentality that may exist and to instill the value of co-operative work and selflessness, for is it not selflessness



Council Meeting in session..... another 'Private Vietnam'?



that had compelled us to stand up for election to sweat out for the Union?"

GOOD CHALLENGE

Mr. Soh could not conceive why the vote of non-confidence on some of his fellow Ex-co members was tendered. He said, "No doubt, we must take it as a very good challenge, however it is also inevitable that psychological and emotional stresses are caused to us. We hope that students should not abuse their rights and try to overthrow their leaders over unsolid and trivial reasons. Do bear in mind that no student leader is infallible — we will in the course of our duty perform countless mistakes. The students, if they have the Union in mind, should consider carefully before they throw a vote of non-confidence on their leaders. I urge the students to keep a watchful eye on us. Tell us when we are wrong and if we fail to correct ourselves, then we will have proved ourselves unworthy of our posts."

"The 15th Students' Council will continue with the proposed setting up of the co-operative bookstore at ARC and see to its successful completion", Mr. Soh announced, "This co-op store, where items like books, stationeries, tee-shirts, files, etc., are sold, was conceived with the students of ARC and PMC in mind so that they need not travel all the way to PEC to buy the items." Mr. Soh also said that the Council has plans to organize forums and seminars for the students.

HONG KONG STUDY BY POLY STUDENT

'Living in a changing world — the case of Hong Kong', a Union publication is now ready for distribution to all students. This study on the social and cultural values and changes undergone by Hong Kong in her quest for modernization was undertaken during and after the Students' Exchange Programme with the Chinese University of Hong Kong in December 1973 by Henry Yeo. The above publication is the result and students should find it most interesting and informative. If interested, please collect your copy at the P.E.C. Secretariat as soon as possible as the number of copies are very limited only.

From page 3

THE TASEK UTARA TRAGEDY

institution of Malaysia, where oppression and exploitation of the poor is always inevitable, if not rampant. The poor has little or no choice but to remain poor. The breadwinner of each of the families affected has to work hard, real hard to ensure survival. Inherent of a capitalist society, the poor remain poor and through exploitation and oppression of the poor, the rich gets richer, hence the widening of socio-economic disparities. It is also inherent of a capitalistic society that laws and policies are more than often formulated on the interest of the rich elite group — subjugating the poor. The J.B. squatters had little choice but to infringe upon the law, that is, to squat. The statement issued by the Students' Christian Movement of Singapore summed up very clearly — Tasek Utara is a clear instance of repression against the people who have been dispossessed of the land; people made homeless and are prevented from living within the bounds of the law. The full weight of the law has been brought down against these landless. When laws work against the people, they lose all moral force. Legality for legality's sake becomes meaningless. All pious allusions to law and order without justice becomes gross obscenities."

The Tasek Utara incident, as the authorities would readily explain was inevitable as there must be no impediment to "development". Whether who benefits from such "development" was however unanswered. The decision-maker would then claim that the situation was undesirably exploited by outside elements (political opposition parties and even students), who motivated the squatters to demonstrate at the J.B. State Secretariat. Whether true or not is immaterial. The demonstration proved that the governed even though oppressed as they were have not lacked the courage to speak out and stand up against the injustices inflicted upon them. The demonstration staged by the students both in Malaysia and Singapore was also a manifestation of the deep concern of the way the people are ruled. The authenticity of the motives of SPSU and USSU when they demonstrated to register this concern had been heavily questioned upon — we were alledged of deliberately interfering the sovereignty of another country.

However it should occur that it was more questionable whether the tragical Tasek Utara incident, not detaching from the fact that the squatters had initially placed so much faith in the government (they even christened their newly setup community, "Kampong Barisan National") was all nothing more than a part of the strategy of the ruling party, in what one may bluntly term as "dirty politicking". But that is unimportant. What mattered most was the situation then — the squatters were left in the open with no shelter above them —

something must be done and immediate redress was urgent.

'MISSING LINK'

Students today are fast sinking in apathy and parochialism. The present curriculum we are exposed to has little to arouse awareness among students in the problems facing society. The too

heavy emphasis on acquisition of technical or other mere utilitarian skills had conditioned us to isolate the social and political aspects of life. There is certainly a "missing link" in the educational process we undergo today. As for the present situation, the Union's unconditional commitment to the squatters issue — a cause of humanity was a part of the challenging and authentic role of Student Unionism today.



Felling blood, sweat and tears.



Hysteria to herald a blank future.



UMSU leader arrested — words falling on deaf ears.



The 'camp-in' AJ J.B. State Secretariat — futile attempt to stand up against oppression.



"A village that was"

From Our Technocrats

ITC – DIPLOMA QUESTION: ELECTRONIC STUDENTS' REPLY

Dear Editor,

Your front page article (July/August Issue) on the "protest" by a group of final year 'electronics guys' against the admittance of ITC graduates to the 4th Year E/O Diploma courses contains many erroneous statements.

In our letter to the principal, we mentioned that the recent batch of ITC graduates, now attending 4th Year Part-Time Courses, would be one year ahead of us after completing both their National Service and part-time Diploma Courses. And due mainly to this, we were termed "selfish". We however hoped that before the writer wrote these words, he had first pondered over the reasons as to why the 1st Year Common Engineering Course was introduced in the 1972/1973 academic session, resulting in the 1st Year ITC Course being scrapped off, and why Poly is still conducting both the Diploma and ITC Courses.

All of us know that the 1st Year Common Engineering Course was introduced because those concerned ITC students claimed that it was utterly unfair to stream students into either Diploma or ITC Courses on the basis of their SC results. This what we believed, was true for statistics had shown that some ITC students did better in the sessional exams than their counterparts in the Diploma Courses. With the introduction of the 1st Year Engineering Course, every student was given the same opportunity to "fight" for a place in the Diploma Courses. We were all informed about these on the Freshman Convention 72/73 and the then principal Mr. Edis further elaborated that the streaming would depend on the overall performance of the student throughout the year and also the sessional exam results. Those with better results were then streamed into Diploma Courses.

And yet exactly 2 years later, starting with the 1974/75 academic session, the present principal, Mr. Ager, had totally altered the objectives initially implemented for the 1st Year Common Engineering Course, which required so much effort and time. Doesn't this show that the Administration was rather inconsistent in their implementation of policies? That these changes had not met with much constructive opposition from the students was attributed to the apathetic, submissive and "what-can-be-done" mentality of Polytechnic students and not that they supported the new policies is undeniable.

Everyone here knows that there is a need for both Diploma and ITC Courses. This is so because, in industries, ITC graduates more or less bridge the gap between Diploma-technicians and craftsmen. Hence ITC graduates should spend a few years working in the relevant field before they can pursue their Diploma Courses immediately after they have graduated and are working, then the objective of having ITC graduates is entirely pointless, besides creating two different levels of the same Poly Diploma, we were told by our E/O friends that the highest level in Mathematics of a E/O Diploma Course is equivalent to that of a second year Mathematics syllabus of the full-time Diploma Course. In spite of these, ITC courses are still conducted and graduates from these courses are permitted to attend 4th Year Part-Time Diploma Courses immediately. If this policy of the Administration is to be continued, the Administration may as well scrap off ITC courses and conduct only Diploma Courses.

We also know that their entry to the 4th Year Part-Time Courses is conditional. However an agreement has been reached between the Administration and the Ministry of Defence. This Ministry will try its best to get the concerned students relevant jobs after their basic training. In other words, they will be

guaranteed jobs in the relevant field. At this junctions we may add that according to our E/O friend now doing National Service, a relevant job is not necessary to allow them to remain in the E/O classes. Your writer also mentioned that in the Production Engineering Department, the staff – student ratio is still far from satisfactory. This is true but, we do not know why only the Production Engineering Department was mentioned when the same problem is so apparent in every other department in the Poly. Now that the concerned students are attending 4th Year Part-Time Courses, the problem will definitely become worse. This is so for more students mean that every lecturer has to spend less time with each group of students.

With reference to his so written phrase of equating Poly technicians and prostitutes together, we like to say that any Poly technician who takes pride in being a Poly technician, should never, never during any occasion equate himself or herself to a prostitute. He should have used the word "exploited" instead.

At the present moment we, technicians from the Poly, are being exploited by the industrialists simply because we do not unite into a single bargaining force and fight for better working benefits. This directly results from the apathetic attitudes of students and the large number of graduates from the Poly. The recent intake of the ITC graduates will result in us being further exploited. This is the consequence of increased supply and decreased demand.

If anyone is to observe and analyse the present situation in the Poly, one will come to a conclusion that this institution is in the process of mass-producing technicians holding diplomas. For the last session, there were 1,700 odd graduates, of which 1,100 odd were diploma graduates. We aren't saying that producing large number of graduates necessitate a drop in standard. While Ngee Ann Technical College had time and again stressed so much on quality than quantity, our college is doing just the reverse. We felt that Ngee Ann should play an equal role in training technicians as our Poly. Now with the introduction of the 1st Year Common Engineering Course and the entry of the ITC graduates into 4th Year Part-Time Courses, the numbers of graduates from Diploma courses are bound to increase tremendously.

Already there is insufficient facilities to cater for the present number of students. With the Administration's policy to even increase the intake of 1st Year students annually, the process is very much apparent. Because of the factors above, especially with the introduction of the 1st Year Common Engineering Course, every Poly student is becoming more exam-orientated and more indifferent towards the institution's activities. This indifferent attitude only results in a further downfall of the Poly's image in the public's eye.

To put a stop to this, here are some suggestions the Administration can ponder on. Firstly, the Administration should make it a policy that the students' population should always be as near the optimum value as possible. In this way, only the best facilities will be offered to the students. However, if it wants to increase the students' population, it can do so only if more facilities are made available to the students. Again the student population should be aimed at the optimum value. Lectures should also be given training in lecturing and be taught psychology and the like. This will result in the lecturers having a correct approach in lecturing and furthermore they will understand students better. Hence more information can be passed to the students in a shorter period and the communication gap between students and lecturers will eventually be removed. We strongly deplore some lecturers who gave hints on the

examination to students. This is both unfair and demoralising. In addition there should be compulsory participation of every student in the institution's activities like forums, seminars, debates, sports, Union and welfare projects. These not only instil pride in every Poly technician but at the same time make him aware of the matters around him and also prepare him for challenges in the near future. These are the people S'pore needs and Poly can be proud of herself if she is capable of producing such students.

— Electronics Students

Ed: Our writer was not wrong in saying that "ITC-converted" Diploma students doing their term in the army would be one year ahead of their fellows doing fulltime diploma courses. He saw the actions of "electronics guys" as selfish because he believed that we should not throw obstacles along the path when our fellows are given the opportunity to further their studies. There is absolutely nothing wrong in saying that "Unless we want to sell ourselves like prostitutes to the industrialists". While our writer did not at any time equate Poly students to prostitutes, he deplored those trying to sell 'their bests' to the industrialists, and that explained why "electronics guys" apparently were trying their best to outrun others. You have raised a number of points on college policies which we hope the Administration would comment on.

Dear Editor,

As a First Year Student, stepping for the first time into the S'pore Polytechnic, I came to know of a Student's Union only during the Orientation Programme. I must admit that my first impression of the Student's Union was extremely good. Unfortunately, that impression has faded out as I came to know more about what was happening around. Please do not get me wrong, for I am all for the Student's Union. During the Orientation, I took a few mishaps and shortcomings as unavoidable in any organisation but then, these did not stop there, nor were any attempts made to remedy them. Firstly, concerning the recent Union Elections, I came to know that only 28.8% of the Students voted and participated, I am not at all surprised for the majority of the new students were lost, and perhaps even a majority of the senior students? Who were going to stand for the Elections? I did not know, neither did my friends. As 'Scope' wrote in their newsletter, I quote, "Students belonging to the second category are simply apathetic, not without cause, towards the elections and even the Union. Their sole aim is to safeguard a diploma or certificate." I think Scope is mistaken. We students are not apathetic and without cause, for if we are, we would not be subscribing termly to the Students Union. We would have protested to the Administration long ago that we are not going to pay any money for such a cause as we are not interested. On the other hand, I think that the Union has failed us in that it had failed to communicate effectively with the general student population. Concerning the Elections again, most students had this thought, "Who are we to vote for if we attend the Elections? If we vote blindly, we might vote for the wrong kind of people. It is much better to leave it to those who know the future leaders."

Secondly, what has the Union done for the majority of the Students. I have already subscribed \$12 to the Union and what I got in return was a piece of paper, requesting me to support the fight for price justification in food prices. I do expect the Union to do something worthwhile. There were activities like balls, parties, etc. organised but these are not for the general student interests and as far as I know, even these luxuries have to be paid for. For an organisation to be successful, they must contribute something free and beneficial in return, and not being money-minded all the time.

Thirdly, the Union in getting involved in the wrong kind of activities. As far as possible, I think the Union should avoid all political issues. I do not want to be branded as a rebel, like students in other countries such as USA & Thailand. In my opinion, the S'pore Govt. is one of the most efficient in the world and for students to correct them is certainly ironical.

am glad to mention that activities such as welfare, fund raising, etc. is certainly a warm welcome and for this, I must give credit to the Union.

Moreover, I feel that the Technocrat should not publish any articles that are injurious to anybody. As far as I can see, the lecturers have been the most unfortunate targets. Respect must be given to all lecturers, no matter how wrong they may be. If we do not learn how to respect our seniors, how are we to respect our superiors when we venture out of this institution? Criticism of the elders show lack of maturity. As the saying goes, "Do not teach your grandmother how to suck eggs".

In conclusion, I would like to say that I have not given up hope for the Union. I am still a firm supporter of the Students' Union and I hope that criticisms are taken as guidelines for the organisation to progress, and not as a ping-pong ball, to be hit back at the opponent.

K.C. YOUNG
TE 1/FT

Dear K.C. Young

Grandmothers do not suck eggs anymore, the present trend is to break it open over a plate, add a dash of pepper and sauce and consume it elegantly with a spoon. That is to say that beside the old traditional approach there are new approaches to a problem that can prove to be more efficient and it is with the way lecturers do their job.

If we students should see any shortcomings or a better approach to a certain issue we should not hesitate to voice our comments, for not are we only helping the lecturer in question, we are also, in the process, educating ourselves.

The Technocrat has never meant to be injurious to anyone and it will never be.

Ed.

TO EAT OR NOT TO EAT?

Dear Editor,

It is only a few minutes to go. Those who could not tolerate the boring, monotonous speaker at the front of the room any longer began to pack up their files, while others who had patience pretended to pay attention for the last few minutes. Those classified as "heroes" had left the room long before.

At last, the clock's needle which seemed to be nailed on the clock's face, somehow got freed and struggled to the position indicating lunchtime. Within seconds, to the surprise of the monotonous speaker at the front, the room which once was filled with empty tummies, was empty. All these empty tummies have gone to the gracious ARC canteen in search of man's greatest love, (or at least a hungry man's greatest love) — FOOD.

In this canteen, one can see the well-displayed menu board for Mondays right up to Saturday. One of which proudly says, (and it is the one with something written on), "One drink can take one glass only".

Getting a choice of food in this canteen is never a problem. To start with, if you are a Indian food enthusiast, you can have a couple of rubberised roti-platas with nice overnight Indian curry, or you can also have Indian rojak which is a mixture of a wide variety of flour.

If you like Chinese food instead, char-siew or chicken rice flooded with a soup that has a formula yet to be discovered by the chemists might suit your taste. That is not all, there is another stall which specialises in making a wide range of Chinese food like yellow vegetables, wild shark's meat in tomato ketchup, fried chicken bones, Chinese curry with no ingredients other than curry powder and water, just to name a few. Credit should be given to this stall for their generosity in using Ajinomoto.

For those who prefer something other than rice, there is the stall which mass produces fried kway-teow without having quality control. Another provides bee-hoon soup and fried

beehoon, whose service is so good that by the time you receive your order, the lunchtime is over.

To quench your thirst after you have your food, you can choose from a wide range of soft drinks, (which happen to be the only thing that has quality in this canteen), from the soft drinks stall served by frightening long-faced people. And don't forget, "One drink can take one cup only."

If it is a cold day, you may like a cup of tea or coffee. You can have plain or with milk, and "with milk" means "with 80% sugar and 20% milk, and they sure make it sweet.

Coming back to those empty tummies, more often than not, unfortunately, their appetite for food disappears when they see how the forks and spoons are washed. And with the type of food found in this canteen, the condition worsen. But what other choice do they have, other than to swallow whatever is the only available source of food in ARC and be contented with it.

– ARC STUDENT –

Dear ARC Student,

Perhaps your stomach can now rest easy with the new canteen situation, brought into effect by the new canteen caterer who came in with the 2nd Term. However should you still have any digestive dissatisfaction, do not hesitate to drop us a line.

Ed.

Dear Editor,

I would be very glad if this note can slip into the pages of the S'pore Technocrat, an official organ of the S.P.S.U.

I would like to clarify some falsely suggestive assumptions that were reported in your edition of July/August issue on page 14 of the said paper, entitled, "The Winner". Too many things stated had revealed the preconventional level of moral thoughts in the Students' Union as I take the words are the official statements released by them.

A man fighting with his own self-chosen standards of rights in principles in protecting certain values (a postconventional level concept) is characterised by the Union as a person with weak and unsporting character. If the protest not address to the President, is not comprehensive for your general understanding allow me to put it in the preconventional level, "It is the matter of principles (too abstract) – right from wrong – that we are protesting and not the nature of the Award given to us."

In that, I strongly rebuked your Editorial Board and shall not hesitate to repel your anxiety in associating my name with things that is unbearable to my sight of principles.

The Union tends to have pride in compelling an award to the would-be receiver who strongly resisted to acknowledge – by printing their names (without consent) in black and white to be reserved in the national archive/library for future references.

Never had this degenerating, despicable act been practised in any organisation of my association which constitutionally proclaimed to follow a democracy system.

Thus, I strongly demand the withdrawal of my name and the Union's wrongly and malicious assumption – unable to obtain what they seeked – which had caused a deframatory to my fellow colleagues including my true natural self. We seek not to satisfy our own needs that will gain rewards and the return of favours, nor recognition by getting the Award. In good faith, I hope to see the last of my name in this publication. I so-called by you/Union as quitter had already won numericals "battles" in the course of study in the Polytechnic had come

to appreciate that Awards are materialistic that will be given and forgotten. But, with principles, it leaves to multiple exponentially.

Finally, with heavy relief and thanksgiving, my thoughts shared by my fellow colleagues feel with heartfelt thankfulness that we are not awarded with the Gold or the Silver under such unpractised principles.

As new leaders are gaining power into the Students' Council, it is my hope that the last of such "acts" been seen.

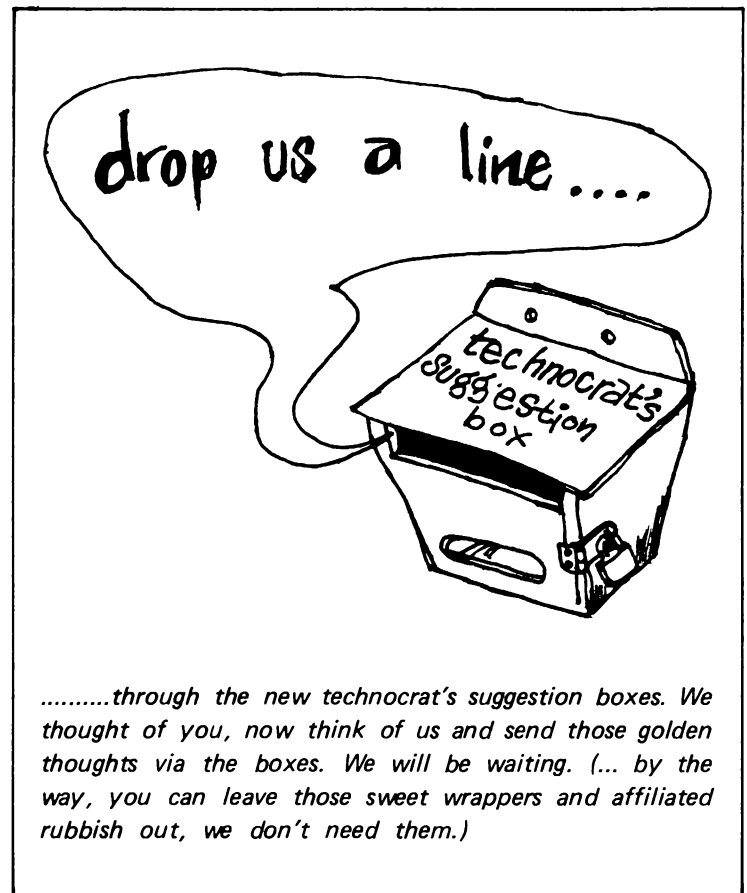
– FRED TAN –

Dear Fred,

Your protest, so helpfully phrased in the preconventional level for my general understanding, is regrettably still too highbrow for my meagre comprehension. What I can note is that perhaps you have been too wrapped up in all your post/preconventional concepts and abstract level of thoughts for you to really come to face reality in a practical and dogmatic way.

As you sign off with heavy relief I write with heavy apology that the Editorial Board will not withdraw its statements. That was what happened, what we felt and what we thought the students ought to know. You said yourself that Awards are materialistic, to be given and forgotten, why contested for it in the first place?

Ed.



MARINE ENGINEERING SOCIETY

PRESENTS

'MARINERS EXPLOSION REVIVAL'

Date: 28th December 1974.
Place: Grand Ballroom, Hilton Hotel
Time: 9.00 p.m. to 3.00 a.m.
Hi-Lite: Fashion Show

Tickets at \$10 per couple are now available at Union House.

From page 5

CENSURE

Mr. Simon Lim came under heavy fire for being the 'Indian Chief' of the Students' Council; he was accused of manipulating the Councillors although little substantiation was given. What was indeed irrelevant and laughable were the allegations (which one would more readily interpret as a compliment) that Mr. Simon Lim was a politically motivated person and that he had proven himself during the last Inter-Varsity debate when he mentioned that in Singapore the public too often refrain from criticizing their ministers! Whether ministers should be subjected to criticisms or not remains immaterial. The fact that speakers in a debate do not often speak in line with their convictions, their primary motive being to win the debate, never occurred to Mr. Chuang was hilarious. Expectedly, the motion failed to be carried.

The motion of censure arrived in subsequence, this time reading, 'I, Simon Lim move that this house recognising that, a) Mr. Chuang Pinky had tried to create confusion in the 15th Council A.G.M. by proposing a motion, of non-confidence on some Ex-cos, notice of which was duly given but not naming in the first instance the Ex-cos in question during discussion on his proposed motion, and b) Mr. Chuang Pinky had abused the

15th Council, Social Secretary, Mr. Dominic Chang, in front of the members of the house at the same A.G.M., therefore resolves to censure Mr. Chuang Pinky and to send him to the Disciplinary Committee and that this motion, if carried, be put up on all Union notice boards for a period of two weeks", seconded by Mr. Wong Chee San.

It was undisputable that Mr. Chuang had acted with little regard for the important significance of the A.G.M. Right from the very start it was clear that his actions were detached from any considerations of the many implications of such an issue. His impetuous move to forcibly snatch a piece of paper from Mr. Dominic Chang in the midst of the arguments was a most unwelcomed gesture which many from the house had found unforgiveable. What was perhaps more unforgiveable were the formlessness of the charges brought against the Ex-cos. It should be appropriate at this juncture to note that even though the right of one to undertake to throw a vote of non-confidence on one's leaders is inprescriptible there can be no pardon for one to abuse one's rights; rights must be coupled with a responsibility.

It still remained debatable, whether Mr. Chuang had in mind to bring about disorderliness or confusion to the meeting, but the members of the house on that evening, certainly could not see any sincerity in his moves, thus deeming it necessary to take disciplinary actions on Mr. Chuang to prevent any reoccurrences of such a regrettable incident. The motion of censure was duly passed.

WITH YAK

Hair Raising Exam at ARC

Without much doubt every exam is always viewed as first class hair raising horror experience. The periodic first term examination at ARC was no exception save for the fact that it was one degree more hair raising, and the word is meant, literally. Perhaps the whole story must have got by your diligent ears by now, if not, herewith an authentic account and the impressions sadly adherent in line with the deed.

It began in the examination hall. Silence reigned in full, every mind was deep in concentration, every pen nimble in its function; when suddenly in a mouth-drying moment two figures strolled surreptitiously in, immediately identifiable as the Head of ARC, Mr. Khoo Kay Chai and the Asst. Registrar, Mr. Devan. Students, supposed to be working on their paper, were taken aback but can only watch helplessly as the two strode from male to male in their notorious mission, code-named Operation-Your-Hair-Is-Long-So-Kindly-Hand-Over-Your-Admission-Card.

Needless to say the whole act demoralised and upset the students' studious spirits so much so that most of them had to give up their paper in disgust. Outside of the examination room the disgust manifested into a fiery rage, a rage focused at the dirty trick of using a respectable examination hall as a mean to a vile end. Khoo and Devan had gone a step too far; outside the notices warned that those with long hair will be refused admission which means that those already inside the hall had the accepted norm which therefore gives Khoo and Devan no excuse to trespass into the hall, and to disrupt concentration and agitate already frustrated minds.

The trepidation of the act was too much for the students to just sit and brood over it, a number of enraged students, bitter with the irrationality of the administrators, gathered at the office and demanded the return of their admission cards. By the way, it wasn't all those with long, flowing locks who were axed, in fact a large percentage were those whose hair just happened to unfortunately drop out of line and gently glance off the ears or the collars.) The enraged students got back their cards, without so much of a restraintment or resistance. Which is a surprise! Considering all the

trouble they went through from class to class. This serves to evince the erratic and feeble faith put into the whole operation.

So much for that contradicting accident. The artist had to add further detriment to his portrait. A few days later, with the examination nearing its end, Mr. Khoo took the trouble to go on his rounds once more, now ridiculously sending students out for a haircut in the very middle of an examination, at a place an hour's journey away. Shocked students were soon asking, what manner of a man is he? How unreasoning and mechanical can a man be in his thoughts?

Reflections and implications were a myriad after the entire nightmare came to a close. Casting aside the flimsy facade excuse of keeping in line with the anti-long hair policy and looking deeper into the meaning of the scandalous deed, we can see clearly that the operation stemmed from a deep lack of humane feeling for us students. The admin. sees us not as people but as things that represent them and therefore must be kept kempt and impressive, blatantly ignoring our individuality and sentiments. The outrageous act was a clear definition; it showed that the admin. was not sincere in conducting the exam as a mean to assess our standard but to crudely use it as a net, in more simpler words, it showed how much M/s. Khoo and Devan thought of us. Sending students out for a haircut manifested the disrespect, it also mirrored irrational and illogical thinking.

Administrators like to be respected, and they need to be respected. But wielding power around viciously is never the way to achieve it. Respect is borne from trust. If our administrators go on the way they are, then respect is a dim light away in the distant. How would they ever expect to be respected when they only have so little for us? The above supererogatory act had deteriorated the situation and magnified the torn mutual trust.

The present way of things is ignominious. All we ask for is an end to the mechanical attitude adopted in carrying out duties, and a little touch of consideration and humanity to be put into it instead. After all, we are still beings of the same human race.

Press censorship in Singapore took its toll on yet another victim. The Press statement below, issued by Mrs. T.T. Rajah, wife of the lawyer, Mr. T.T. Rajah who was among those arbitrarily detained in the June mass arrest, failed to pass through the sieve of our much subjugated local Press. However, we, from the 'Technocrat' Editorial Board, through our convictions that freedom of expression cannot be restrained, deemed it necessary to produce the statement so that it will not be left unheard. We bid you to read on and we trust that you would conclude it intelligently.

III - Treatment Of Political Detainees In Singapore

We have called this press conference to inform the press and we hope with your help, to inform the general public — at least in other countries, for we know the press is gagged locally — of the latest news concerning those thirty odd democratic and revolutionary persons who were arbitrarily arrested in June 1974 this year by the fascist PAP regime.

Since their arbitrary arrest they have been imprisoned without even the pretence of a public trial. These political prisoners have been continuously subjected to long periods of round-the-clock interrogations in very cold rooms, wearing only very light prison clothing. Often ice-cold water was splashed on to their faces and clothes. Many have been physically assaulted. Forcing them to do repeated and strenuous exercises seems to be a favourite pastime for their sadistic captors. These apparently innocent exercises conceal a far from innocent motive. Political prisoners were forced to continue the exercises after fatigue so as to over exert, to damage the muscle resulting in not only severe pain for days, but more malignantly, causing damage to the kidneys. Tan Kim Sin and Tay Chian Peng, to mention just a few were subjected to this form of torture.

Three months after their arrest, they are still kept in solitary confinement, in small dark cells for nearly 24 hours. Goh Teck Nam, a University of Singapore graduate, for example, has been denied a blanket, a pillow and is not even allowed the usually permitted few minutes of fresh air outside his cell in the Top Floor of the Central Police Station. Reading and writing materials are denied to the majority. T.T. Rajah was denied writing materials when he wanted to write to the government controlled Advisory Board! The aim is to cut a person off from all social contacts, from being part of the society. The total effect of solitary confinement in a closed narrow space and cut off from all contacts with society, is to — disorientate a person, to break a person down, to make him insane. The deleterious effects of solitary confinement is well known to medical science. Mental derangement is the result these sadistic and totally inhuman perpetrators hope for when they resort to this form of psychological torture. One could even excuse them if they are ignorant of the effects of solitary confinement. But this can hardly be so, for precisely because of deleterious effects of solitary confinement, are well known, that laws have been enacted to protect common criminals from being subjected to prolonged solitary confinement, even as a form of punishment for indiscipline in prison. Thus we have a situation where criminals are protected against solitary confinement, but political prisoners are deliberately subjected to it. This is so, for the fears of the PAP ruling clique and their henchmen in the secret police knows no bounds. Humanity is a word not to be found in their "rugged" vocabulary. Today, crimes against humanity are being daily committed by the fascist PAP regime. Fundamental human rights as proclaimed in the U.N. Charter is for the PAP a concept to be cynically and hypocritically mouthed by their so-called academics at the U.N. It is a concept totally alien to their concept of society. Law is the secret police. This has been stated over and over again by the secret police and is well illustrated by their actions. It is possible that the PAP ruling clique and their henchmen have not pondered over the significance of the Nuremberg Trials, perhaps, they have not even heard of Nuremberg.

A few months at the hands of this kempetai set-up, and Chong Seng had to be admitted to the Thomson Road General Hospital for medical resuscitation. Last week T.T. Rajah was found in a state of total collapse in his cell and had to be carried out for medical attention. He had not been feeling well for a week prior to this, and had requested for a medical check-up in the hospital but of course this was never done. Instead, taking advantage of his ill health brought on by ill-treatment, the secret police even tried to further discomfort him by switching on his cell lights every fifteen minutes throughout the night so as to prevent him from sleeping.

For how long will this illegal confinement continue? For how long will these torture last? We can only say that truth and justice will finally prevail. Those dedicated to democracy, to the well being of their people can never be broken. History has shown us that the evil and the corrupt will surely get their just desert.

We appeal to all those who believe in justice and democracy to protest against such actions of the fascist PAP regime.

Signed: Mrs T.T. Rajah
for families of Political Prisoners.

September, 1974.

Dear Comrades,

. . . . I Am Yours Fraternally,

“..... but how can we call you COMRADE when you behave like a tortoise in our presence?”

Wednesday, 30th October, Jurong Town,

About one hundred and fifty workers of American Marine (S) Pte. Ltd. gathered at their workers' union house at Jurong town in the hope of meeting their union leaders. The workers, members of the Pioneer Industries Employees' Union, an arm of the National Trade Union Congress, were among some 1000 workers facing the ugly consequences of a lay-off imposed on them by the company since 19th October. A week earlier, (23/10/74), they had also gathered at the Union Premises. The mission then was to see the Union leaders with regards to their plight. The official lay-off period was seventeen days (19/10 – 5/11). Needless to say, no one can survive on air and water alone.

They were to awaken their union leaders to see their need for survival and subsequently represent them to bargain with the company for compensation for the lay-off period. One wonders when such ironical situation could arise. A union, and particularly a workers' union, must be working for the interest and safeguarding the welfare of her members. Unless a union exists on a different standing, it should be straining its neck to smell any foul air in the labour scene. PIEU obviously had its neck shrunk in, in much the same way as a tortoise retracts into its shell. And as if being more of a tortoise than anything else, its neck seemed to have shrunk deeper. It was clear; the workers gathered at their Union house the whole day and tried to contact the PIEU Secretary General, Mr. Phey Yew Kok. Apart from the usual difficulty in using facilities like the telephone they were told that their leader was in the Parliament session.

A whole day was spent in trying to contact their leader and it was not until in the evening when Mr. Phey came and met them. The whole atmosphere of the Union-leader-meet-his-people-session was one of disintegration and alienation between leader and the led. The already enraged workers were to be tempered; anti-Union sentiments were stirred up when the leader uttered such words amounting to, “If you have the guts, stand up and be counted”. Guts and gusto were not the issue of the day as the workers' common problem was their bread and butter for the seventeen days lay-off. They wanted the Union to represent them – a reserved right of a Union member; ironically, events turned into a situation where the right had to be negotiated and worse of all demanded.

The negotiation for union-company negotiation for compensation unfolded an era in unionism in the labour scene of today that seemed more of an accomplice in exploitation. An era where leaders do not or trying not to see the main issue of the workers. The leader did not pledge solidarity with the workers; did not discuss with the workers how best they could solve the problem together; did not even listen sympathetically to the cries of the workers. What happened instead was a frail promise of help in looking for alternative employment and indications of the union being unable to handle the case which would ultimately be referred to the Labour Ministry. Mr. Phey was unable to give a direct answer to the workers on that evening and asked for a week grace.

One week 'expired' on 30/10/74 and as early as 10.00 a.m., the workers gathered at the same place. They were supposed to meet their leaders. Instead, what happened was a 'fraternal

comrade' greeting them first. A notice which was stuck on the notice board outside the union office read:

PIONEER INDUSTRIES
EMPLOYEES' UNION
Dear Comrades, - AMERICAN MARINE BRANCH.
PLEASE BE INFORMED THAT UNION &
MANAGEMENT WILL MEET AT LABOUR
MINISTRY ON 6.11.74 TO SOLVE THE
DISPUTE OF LAY-OFF FOR THE PERIOD
FROM 19.10.74 to 5.11.74.
MEMBERS WILL BE INFORMED IN DUE COURSE
THANK YOU. Yrs. FRATEERNALLY: LAWRENCE KWEEK
ASST. GENERAL SEC.

That was all the workers got. Nobody came to see them, not even after they had waited for a whole day. This leaves one to wonder what those jargons used, like 'comrades' and 'fraternally' actually mean.

Comradeship and fraternity are characteristics of closely united groups; a result of common beliefs and aspirations. Paper comrades alone stinks like foul air contained in chimney effluent. That notice is aligned to the fiery head, splashed with tomato ketchup perhaps grasping for cheap publicity by projecting a false image of close unity of the organisation when in fact the core is rotting and near to a point of collapse. Any bystander who reads the above notice would certainly be impressed. Addressing a fellow by 'comrade' and such other similar terms would certainly inspire in one another a sense of unity and solidarity in the true revolutionary spirit. But to be so impersonal as to put up a notice of this kind and not meeting the workers would only invite sneers and cynical remarks. One would have thought that the so-called union leaders were only existing on paper.

Right from the very beginning (last week), it seemed that the Union was trying to divert the whole issue. An incident which happened today, if proven correct, suggests that the helpless Union had employed unethical and yet subtle tactics in trying to divert attention from the main issue. In the course of their wait and hope to meet their leader, the workers saw the manipulation which were to put them in sheer indignation and utter contempt for their Union. At the same time, it generated a fear that hovered above them for the whole day. This incident also manifested into the main talked-about issue of the day.

At about 11.15 a.m., the doors and windows of the Union house were closed, and noises were then heard, coming from



the inside. It sounded like that of breaking glass and overturning of furniture, etc. ie. destruction of property. Reportedly, some of those inside ran out from the back door and called for the police. And as if the whole episode was pre-planned, the police were already seen around the vicinity before the act started. It did not take long for one to realise that this was an open secret. Stories were fabricated and told to reporters who did not fail to be present at the show. It was so said that some angry workers had stormed the union house through the back door, smashed up the properties and ran out. Fortunately, none of the American Marine workers were inside. In fact, when the noise was heard, the crowd drew back and kept a 'safe' distance from the Union house. One would certainly not risk having one's picture taken at the time this incident took place.

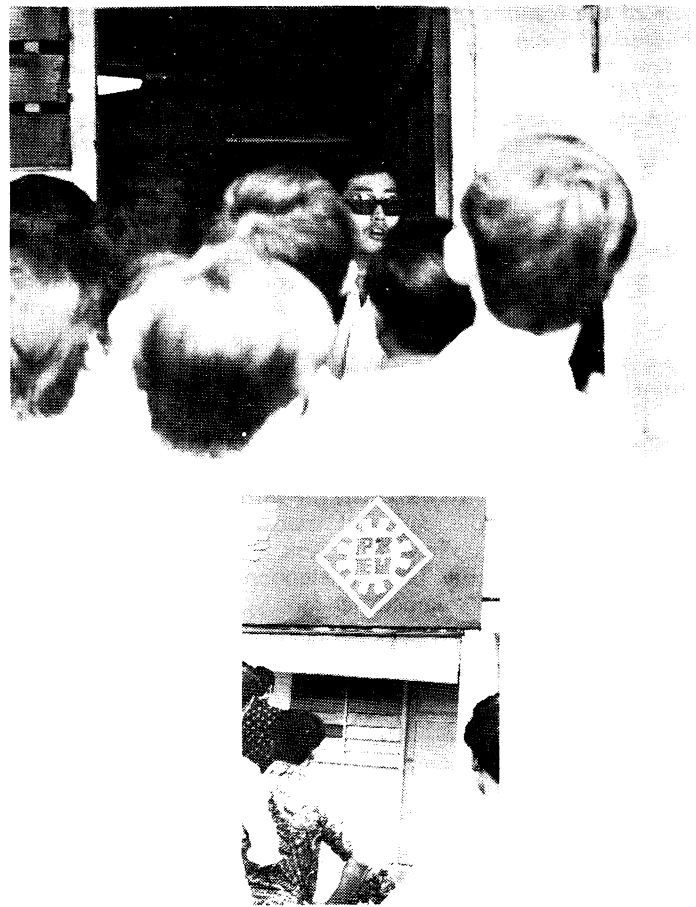
The question of who actually destroyed the furniture in the Union house was not so crucial as the implications of the whole episode and the immediate effects imparted upon the workers. The logical conclusion was of course that those who performed the whole 'dramatic' play were non-other than 'inside people'. However, the Union must also come up with a plot on how to put the blame on the workers, and this inevitably generated fear within the innocent workers — anyone can be unfortunate enough to be pin-pointed.

This conspiracy to deliberately undermine the workers certainly failed to work. The police were of course all around the place and even shifty-looking characters, unmistakably, 'plain-clothes-men' were seen. Perhaps that which back-fired was the fact that nobody was 'caught' and although none was caught, the workers felt uneasy. Even when they saw little hope of seeing their leaders, they felt it risky to leave the scene at that time for to leave would surely put them in a most vulnerable position. Somehow, an impression that the workers are responsible for the act was created. On the other hand, to openly declare that they were not involved would arouse suspicions that they had sound knowledge of what had happened. So what they saw fit to do was to summon the Union officials inside the Union house to relate to them of what actually happened and who the culprits behind the act were. Needless to say, no one came out to explain to them, not even the officials of the American Marine Branch of PIEU who were inside the office



then. Frustrated at the dismayed attitude of their so-called leaders, they finally left at 4.10 p.m. There was no choice but to wait for the 6th of November to come.

Cases of this nature reflecting trade union leaders and members relationship should be made known to all potential Union members. Leadership in trade unions as manifested by this sad incident certainly makes it necessary for an alternative voice of the people. Perhaps one worker summed up quite appropriately, 'I paid Union fees to these people to do God-knows-what in the office. I might as well pay that sum of money to the Labour Ministry, if disputes ultimately go to the Ministry for redress.' Such is one kind of trade union in existence. Indeed, if the Union could do nothing then, the least her leaders could do was to listen to the plight of their workers with sympathy and perhaps there would be hope of a more coherent unity. Hostile and indifferent attitudes of leaders towards their own members will only detach the masses from the leaders. If anything were to smell of comradeship on that day, it is the praiseworthy togetherness and unity of those workers who in the process of confrontation with their so-called leaders are tempered and toughened. This spirit of unity, must be nurtured and cherished.



DEFINITION

Starving a child is Violence
Depressing a culture is Violence
Neglecting school children is Violence
Punishing a mother and her family is Violence
Discrimination against a working man is Violence
Ghetto housing is Violence
Ignoring medical needs is Violence
Contempt for poverty is Violence
**AND THE LACK OF WILL POWER TO HELP
 HUMANITY IS A SICK AND SINISTER FORM
 OF VIOLENCE.**

— Ms. Coreta King Jr.

From page 5

him to table that motion and the house to pass it. He was only greeted with prolonged jeers from an aggressive house. The Chairman's fruitless attempts to maintain order to allow Mr. Simon Lim his rights to speak only lost him his chair. That a large fraction of our student body is still bogged down in helpless irrationality and, worst still, an inexplicable insistence to abstain from intelligent and logical reasoning is undeniable and verified clearly on that chaotic evening.

RHETORICS

The speakers with their rhetorics, fired with vehement emotions were of little help to promote rational thinking among the students. In this connection, Mr. Woon Kok Meng must unfortunately be mentioned. In dismal frustration over the rowdiness prevalent in the house, he deliriously succumbed to emotions and with tempers frayed, vehemently condemned the students for their stark irrationality. It certainly did not occur to him that such a display of emotions can do little to douse the overheated atmosphere, if not to fan it. Mr. Simon Lim, the centre figure of the whole drama, though being able to retain a cool head had also exhibited bitter despise and contempt over the sorry situation of the house. He was criticized a person totally unworthy and unsuitable of safeguarding the welfare of the students since he had himself failed to look after his own welfare by failing in his last examination. It may not be to the knowledge of Mr. Lim's opponents that service and sacrifice for the Union and the selfless defence of students rights will not only expose the student leaders to victimization during examinations but will surely hinder academic progress. However, it would only be to aggravate the situation for Mr. Simon Lim to retaliate by counter-attacking his opponents and other 'ungrateful' students by labelling them 'swines' reiterating that his sacrifice for the Union can only be to 'cast pearls before swines'.

IRRESPONSIBILITY

The proposer of the motion of non-confidence on Mr. Simon Lim was Miss Loo Yin Mei, the Sports Council Secretary. She was largely ineffective and her reluctance to substantiate some allegations made on Mr. Simon Lim was shown when it took several requests from the house to make her appear before the house to speak.

The major offensive thrust on Mr. Simon Lim was instead delivered by the Sports Council President, Mr. Sandy Quek. In actual fact, as one could clearly view it, the debates were dominated by Mr. Quek and Mr. Lim and at times the situation had even deteriorated to nothing more than a personality clash between these two individuals. It still remained inconceivable why Mr. Sandy Quek had alleged Mr. Simon Lim the very serious charge of misappropriation of Union funds when he could not in any way substantiate or present any authentic proof of such an offence. Had it not first occurred to him that such an accusation, even unsubstantiated have massive credibility before a house already so climaxed with emotions? Unless Mr. Quek had intentions to exploit the state of crisis on that evening by deliberately misleading the house, hence undermining Mr. Simon Lim, there seemed little reason why such an issue was first brought out. It would all the same be distressing if it was all a mistake from the start. Any attempts to disillusion and manipulate the house will be sheer disregard for the Meeting, attributed only to irresponsibility.

HOOLIGANISM

The debates were very much centred around the subject of student politics and the Union's involvement in public welfare, sparked off when Mr. Simon Lim was condemned for being politically concious. When Mr. Philip Chia was unanimously voted in by the house as Chairman, it seemed ironical that throughout the meeting, Mr. Chia lacked co-operation from

the students. Somehow the students are unaware that decorum and order must be maintained at all times for the progress of the meeting. Hooliganism prevailed within the house; there was the playing up of sensitive issues, touching on emotions to worsen the situation; the students submitted all too easily to manipulation by some of our local demagogue.

The vote of no-confidence on Mr. Simon Lim was eventually defeated, but there was little of the entire affair that any concerned student could be proud of. The actual happening may even be too shameful for one to dare recall. It certainly is lamentable if such uncivilized and immature behaviours displayed during that regrettable evening are inherent of our student population, so-called college students and presumably the more intelligent section of society.

Scope For Mutual Understanding

The Chinese Language Society (CLS) which can lay claim as one of the most lively affiliated society, launched in August a bi-monthly newsletter, "The Scope", in line with her aims of maintaining closer relations with all fraternal societies within the Polytechnic. In its first editorial, Scope observed that in the past the CLS had paid much attention to fostering greater unity among her members and in promoting healthy cultural activities whilst "matters and problems of interests to fellow students were neglected. Scope was therefore initiated to correct this situation and to create a means of communication and a ground of discussions between us and fellows students, instilling a greater sense of awareness of the events confronting all of us."

That these were not mere aims set up just for the glamour sake of having aims were clearly demonstrated in the contents of her August and October issues. In her first issue she reported on such matters as the recent Union's general elections, the roles of students in society besides, of course introducing the CLS to non-members. In the October issue, it scored a "first" in that it was the first to roll out a report, though brief, on the second adjourned A.G.M. The J.B. Squatters' problems, the origin of the Middle-East conflicts and other international affairs were also published. A report on the Engineering Society Welfare Camp was also included obviously with the idea of instilling a greater awareness in CLS members in other affiliated Societies' activities and thus fostering a better inter - societies relationship.

The CLS must therefore be congratulated and encouraged in her efforts of promoting greater liaison between Societies and Union. She had made the first move and it is left to other societies to reciprocate. As the first step, other societies publications (eg. "EngSoc Time", D'CPT'ions') should extent their circulation to include non-members as did the Scope. In a time like this where students are generally ignorant of other societies other than their own, this is a necessity if we are to break the artificial ice which lies between societies. This Editorial Board, as the committee responsible for the publication of the Union's main organ, therefore seeks to work hand in hand with affiliated societies' publication committees with the objectives as spelt out in Scope as guidelines as well as to discuss and exchange views on problems facing in particular students' Publications Committee. The realisation of producing publications which all Polytechnic students will have an identification can thus be a reality.

WELFARE TALENTIME

— Birth Of A Proud Tradition



The Welfare Talentime with 'sh & sh.'

The Welfare Talentime was perhaps among the most enthralling and successful projects undertaken by the Welfare Services Committee of S.P.S.U., which had already earned a high reputation through their active involvement in various Welfare Organisations in the Republic.

This was the first of such projects held in Singapore and credit should be given not only to its originality but also on the remarkable initiative of the organising committee. As learnt from Mr. Tan Eng Lock, the Chairman of the organising committee, the idea of organising such a talentime developed when some of children from the Homes revealed their talents in a Grand Party held in the 1973/74 Freshmen Orientation. The Welfare Talentime was then initiated with the sole objective 'to reveal their hidden talents to the general public, thereby showing their potentialities'.

The notion that children from Welfare homes are generally mischievous, dull and lacking of talents was palpably proved false when the Talentime reached its final stage, after three sessions of heats and one semi-finals. The 'Grand Finals' held on the evening of 12th October, 1974 at the National Theatre marked the end of one solid year of preparational and organisational work for the committee members. However, credit of success should also be awarded to the enthusiasm of the participants from the various homes. Several though handicapped by their disability, had certainly not failed to impress upon the audience on that night with their remarkable talents and determination.

The talentime was divided into three sections — vocal, instrumental and the Act — O — Rama. A total of twelve children's homes/organisations participated in the talentime with over a hundred boys and girls, several of whom are retarded, crippled, blind or deaf, singing and dancing.

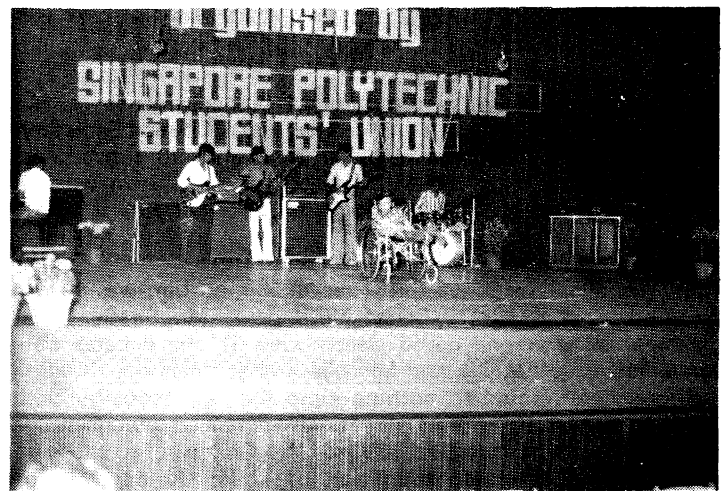
The three and half hour finals was jointly sponsored by Mobil Sports and Recreation Club and Robin shipyard. Lum Tse Wah, a 14 year old Cantonese boy from the Red Cross Home beat the 11 other participants in the vocal section to win the first prize, an return air ticket to Hong Kong. He sang Lobo's 'STONE' on that night from a wheel-chair and received a standing ovation from an impressed audience. His friend, Oslan bin Othman, 13, also from the Red Cross Children's Home, seized second placing with 'BLACK and WHITE'.

A fashion show staged by the children from the School for the Deaf won the first prize in the special Act-O-Rama section. The parade which was compered by a stone-deaf girl won a big applause from the audience. Nine years old Teo Siew Lay from the Chen Su Lan Methodist Childrens' Home was the champion in the instrumental section. She played the winning number, "Scherzo" by Haydu, on the piano.



Oslan..... wheeling down success.

To allow more children from the homes to bring to light and develop their talents, the Welfare Services Committee has proposed to keep on with the momentum to make the Welfare Talentime a bi-annual affair. We can be doubly sure that so long as the spirit remains the next talentime will see more youthful talents and greater improvement. We can rightly conclude that a proud and enthralling tradition has been born.



Lum Tze Wah, the star of the night.



Parading Fashion in style.