SENATE REJECTS SUBMISSION

In the face of united opposition by non-academic staff the Senate chose to impose a superannuation scheme which Technical and Laboratory Staffing Association (T.A.L.S.A.) described as 'unsatisfactory and discriminatory'.

The University News No. 2 page 3, while reporting the submission, strangely enough glossed over the staff opposition.

Subsequent to a letter sent out to all 1,800 non academic staff in the first week of March 1973, a lunch time of meeting on 6th March was hurriedly convened by the Technical and Laboratory Staff Association inviting all non academics to attend. The need for such a meeting was expediteed by the fact that the proposals put forward by Mr. Richie, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Fabric of Finance) were to go before the Senate for approval on 8th March.

On the 6th March, Mr. Richie was confronted by over 200 angry non academics who fired many pertinent questions at him. This meeting should go down in the history of the University as it is the first of any significant size consisting of members of several unions and professional organisations to assemble in protest of an intended administrative action that of the introduction of compulsory superannuation, for all non staff members. Protesting particularly against the discrimitatory nature for vavouring males at expense of female members.

DISCRIMINATION

It is a fact that over 50% of non academic staff members are female, over 900, the majority of these being in the marriageable age group and most likely to leave their employment long before retirement age. It was pointed out that when these women leave, all they receive back from the Superannuation fund is exactly what they paid in *NO interest*, and this being the case, considering world monetary devaluations, their money will most likely have lost value while the "fund" was minding it. Yet the "Fund" is allowed to use this money to collect interest for itself as Mr. Ritchie put it "to cover those who do remain in employment until retirement.

If this is so, and it is in the Qld. Public Service, and most likely will be so at Qld. University, then never before is the History of Administration will so many paid pay so much for the retirement benefits of so few.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative proposals for other superannuation schemes were submitted by T.A.L.S.A. to the Technical committee, on behalf of all Technical Laboratory Administrative and Library staff which none rejected out of hand. Mr. Ritchie stated that "the F.S.S.U. scheme is designed around academics because they can carry the scheme with them when they move to other Universities to further their academic careers". Who is he trying to kid?!!! For a start any non academic who does just that is immediately penalised by having to forfeit his superannuation and receive his compulsory deductions back without interest. Some categories of non academics will not be employed by the University until they reach a minimum age. Viz. A medical laboratory Technologist doing a part time course, employed as a Laboratory cadet, and who elects to complete the course full time, must seek employment elsewhere until reaching age 25 when the University may again consider re-employing the non fully qualified medical Labatory Technologist.

Again, Mr. Ritchie, not all academics remain academics, many leave to take up private practice (Dr. B. Russell Reader in Metalurgical Eng.) others leave to enter the Priesthood. While many others take overseas posts and leave Australia for good. (the brain drain).

As one woman pointed out to Mr. Ritchie as the majority of girls leave the University to get married or such other more congenial employment their compulsory savings under the scheme are returned without interest, yet the same person could have the money placed instead, into the credit union and drawn 6½% interest.

Mr. Ritchie said "that while this may be so, the person concerned would be covered against invalidity?". Let me point out Sir, that while the cover may be there it does not become operable until the person concerned has exhausted all her sick leave and a further six weeks have lapsed. Again this action victimises any person who "saves" their sick leave.

For comparison, under the proposed scheme, a male Technician earning $6,000 per annum who dies before retirement leaving a widow and 2 school age children; his widow would receive $56 per week under your scheme. Yet if a ditch digger or any person not paying anything into any superannuation scheme dies before retirement, his widow with 2 school age children would, under Commonwealth social setvices receive $65 per week.

WHY STATE SUPER?

Is this State Superannuation scheme being forced onto our staff members by the administration or the state government?? If it is the former then the administrator should remove its rose coloured glasses and see things as they are and not as they would wish them to be. If it is the latter then is Mr. Ritchie being led up the garden path by a State Government, or is he fully aware of his intentions to buy new staff in order to legally steal the interest earned by their money. It is their money you know and if the administration retains any interest that money earns, is it not theft? If he must raise money for University use then what better way than from compulsory levied interest loans from its own employees.

What employer wouldn't jump at the chance of raising working capital by compulsory interest free loans from its own employees.

A POOL FOR INVESTMENT?

And don't kid yourself its not just used as a source of capital, as the representative from State superannuation board confessed, at a meeting between T.A.L.S.A. and the Technical committee, that superannuation money is used for Public Works, – interest free working capital!!!

If the University Administration is so anxious for its non academic staff to be "covered" by superannuation, why is it prepared to offer a superannuation scheme that has been shown to be, and admitted to be, inferior to several alternative schemes put forward by T.A.L.S.A. and other staff organisations.???

Is it a fact that the Deputy Vice Chancellor Prof. Webb, has not just returned from a conference which was aimed at placing all University employees in all Australian Universities under Commonwealth type superannuation scheme??

Maybe its the line of a forcible *legal theft* of interest that is the driving force behind the proposed compulsion.

Then again is it legal?

H.K.