

THE UNIVERSITY UNION — QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The current Union referendum campaign has revealed a lack of knowledge in some areas as to the nature, aims, purposes — and membership — of the University Union.

The issues involved in the present referendum proposals are fully canvassed in the literature accompanying the ballot papers now distributed throughout the University. SOUND, therefore, does not wish to discuss the pros and cons of the proposals.

What does concern us, however, is the fact that many members of the University — particularly staff members — do not realise that they are also members of the Union and entitled to vote in the referendum.

To clear up some popular misconceptions, then, here are the answers to a few questions about the Union:

What is the Union?

Broadly, the Union exists to foster the development of the “non-academic” aspects of University life. From the very beginning of Monash, it was agreed that there should be a “University Union”, providing facilities for the whole University, rather than simply a “Students’ Union”, catering only for students’ interests.

All members of the university are automatically members of the Union and its services and facilities are, therefore, open to members of the academic, administrative and general staffs as well as to students — both on-campus and in the affiliated hospitals and institutions.

Who runs it?

The management of the Union is in the hands of the Union Board, with authority delegated by the University Council under Statute 2.7.

The present Board has 15 members, of whom nine are students, one is a graduate, one is a lay member of Council and four are members of staff. The detailed composition is: Chairman of M.A.S.; previous member of the Board nominated by M.A.S.; two students nominated by M.A.S. (determined by an election of all students); two members of non-sporting clubs nominated by Clubs & Societies Council; two members of sporting clubs nominated by the executive committee of the Sports & Recreation Association; research student elected by M.R.S.A.; member of the Graduates’ Association; representative of University Council; member of Professorial Board; member of University staff, nominated by executive committee of the Staff Association; Comptroller or nominee; Vice-Chancellor or nominee (Chairman).

What are the Board’s responsibilities?

The Union Board is responsible for the administration of buildings, other property and equipment representing a total capital investment of \$2,823,000 and an estimated turnover this year of \$1,670,000.

It has a statutory obligation to advise the University Council on:

- (i) the acquisition or disposal of property for the purpose of the Union
- (ii) the employment of staff for the Union
- (iii) contracts concerning the affairs of the Union
- (iv) the expenditure or investment of Union moneys
- (v) borrowings on the security of future revenue.

It is also required to administer all financial affairs and property of the Union, and to approve the constitutions of the Clubs and Societies Council, the Sports and Recreation Association and such other bodies as designated by the Council.

In practice, these responsibilities cover a very wide range of activities. They include not only the provision and maintenance of places within the Union where members may eat, shop, read and relax, but also the administration of all sporting facilities, both on-campus and at the Alpine Lodge, Mt. Buller, and the seaside camp at Shoreham.

Similarly, it is responsible, through the Clubs and Societies Council, for the many non-sporting activities of the University, including the summer schools.

What of the future?

The present referendum seeks the opinion of Union members on two matters: a proposed reconstitution of the Union Board, and proposals to allow the calling of referenda on Union policy questions.

Any member who has not received his ballot paper in the mail may obtain one on furnishing a statutory declaration to the Acting Warden of the Union, Mr. D. R. Ellis, who is returning officer for the ballot.

Voting ends at 5 p.m. on Friday, April 28.

To answer a few more misconceptions:

The Union Board does **not** control the University Health Service, it is **not** responsible for the work of the Careers & Appointments Office or the Student Housing Office. And the Bookshop is merely a tenant of the Union — the affairs of the bookshop are the concern of the Bookshop Board, which is in no way associated with the Union Board. Nor does the Board publish "Lots Wife", which is the concern of the Monash Association of Students.

ARTS FACULTY BOARD: FURTHER NOMINATIONS CALLED

Only one nomination for the position of undergraduate member of the Arts Faculty Board was received when nominations were called in March. Mr. Keith Harvey, a third year Arts student, will become a member of the Faculty Board when the Council has given its formal approval.

The Faculty Board has directed that further nominations be called for the two remaining positions for undergraduate members.

Nominations will close with the Faculty Secretary at 5 p.m. on Friday, April 28, 1972. Forms of nomination are available from the Faculty office and these must be signed by the nominator, seconder and nominee, all of whom must be undergraduates of the Faculty.

Voting will take place on Thursday, May 4, and Friday, May 5, at the Faculty office from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. and in the Union from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

The elected members will be eligible to attend the Faculty Board meeting on Wednesday, May 10, 1972.

OVERSEAS STUDY OF RETARDATION

Professor Marie D. Neale, of the Faculty of Education, has been awarded the Rosemary F. Dybwad International Award to participate in the 5th International Congress on Mental Retardation in Montreal, Canada, October 1 — 6, 1972. While overseas she will observe developments in the field of mental retardation in Canada and the United States.

MINISTER TO TALK ON DRUGS

The Federal Minister for Customs, Mr. Don Chipp, will speak at a forum on drugs in the Alexander Theatre at lunch time on Tuesday, May 2. The forum has been organised by the Monash Jewish Students' Society.

GRADUATES' SUPPER DANCE

The 1972 Monash Graduation Ball will be held in the St. Kilda Town Hall on Friday, May 5, with dancing from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m.

It will be a black tie-BYO dance and tickets (\$9 a double for members, \$9.50 a double for non-members) may be obtained from the ticket secretaries — Miss Pat Werner (phone 20 7093, after hours) or Miss Jane Smith (50 2626 a.h.).

Authorised by K. W. Bennetts, Information Officer.