

February 25, 1970

The following statement expresses the attitude of a large group of students who, through their experience working with in the existing Student Government mechanism, feel certain definite action is necessary and logical for the future of RPI and its students. It is our opinion that what are commonly known as "the channels" serve only to thwart communication and progress. We can no longer wait while our educations, our very lives are being arbitrarily controlled by an unresponsive and unsympathetic administration.

This afternoon our statement will be presented to President Folsom from whom we expect a response by Sunday. It is our responsibility to recognize our importance in the governance of the University. We must work together to make our educational experience a lasting and meaningful reality.

REQUISITES FOR A TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

We feel that the premises by which the Rensselaer Administration assumes its control of the Institute are unhealthy and dangerous to the cause of higher education.

At present the power of all policy making is concentrated in the hands of the Administration. The faculty are treated as employees; the students as clients. Neither are treated as responsible participants in University decisions. Furthermore, the Administration acts to intimidate the individual and to suppress his political and social freedoms. In short, the student and faculty constituencies of the Institute are subjected to the tyranny of an unresponsive Administration.

The prevailing view of education is that of the Administration. The school exists to dispense technical training. There is no attempt at creating a university education. An education to cultivate a broadly based and accurate knowledge of

what the individual can do in the world is lacking at Rensselaer. Specifically there is no attempt made to achieve the total education necessary to confront and master our pressing social needs.

An Administrative authority derived from these premises benefits neither the faculty nor the students. Nor does it benefit the administrators of such a school, who, as the ultimate decision makers, bear the responsibility of graduating students with an inadequate educational experience.

If Rensselaer is to achieve the status of a true technological university, and if we as students are to receive the education we require, these premises must be dissolved and new ones must be established. Students and faculty must become full and equal participants in policy decisions. The social aspect of our education must be given the same consideration as that of technology. Further more, it is essential that the theories of democratization and depoliticalization be at once applied to all departmental procedures. Only when these criteria are fulfilled, will students and faculty experience the total education of the mind that is promised, yet never realized.

It is thus an absolute necessity that we make an immediate and irrevocable commitment to the following requisites for t a technological university.

I. Library

The Library must be our first priority. We cannot in good faith accept words belied by action.

We require:

- A. The library must be the first building constructed. Further more, construction of this structure must precede the construction and acquisition of all new ground and facilities. *
- B. Construction of the library must begin as soon as possible.

- C. To insure this commitment toward action, architectural contracts must be let no later than March 31, 1970.
- D. The number of volumes, books and journals must be increased to comply with the standards established by the New York State Department of Education for a school of Rensselaer's size.
- E. Immediate student, faculty, as well as administration control must be a requisite for all future building committees.

*This implies that neither the acquisition of the Armory nor construction of the modern classroom building will precede the construction of the library.

- II. In order to achieve a technological university, the rights of the students and faculty must be recognized. Therefore, it is essential that a joint body of students, faculty, and Administrators be created to best determine matters of departmental policy. This would include:

- A. Allocation of funds.
- B. Hiring and Firing.
- C. Tenure.
- D. Curriculum.

and all other related areas. Arbitrary decision-making will no longer be tolerated. The Waterman and Katona incidents must never be repeated.

- III. Mueller

- A. To promote integrity of, to assure an intellectual atmosphere, and to maintain academic freedom in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, it becomes necessary to require the resignation of Dean Ronald A. Mueller. No less than his resignation can be tolerated in view of this individual's incompetence, autocratic policies, his defeatist attitude, and his lack of sensitivity to the critical needs of the school.

- B. Furthermore, by March 31, 1970 each department's students and faculty members are to hold a "vote of confidence" for the respective department chairmen and each school will do likewise for their respective deans.
- C. There will be a committee comprised of equal numbers of students, faculty and administrators to choose a new dean for the school of Humanities and Social Sciences.

IV.

- A. To realize its role in the structure of a technological university, the School of Humanities and Social Science requires that its current budget for the 1970-71 fiscal year be at least doubled.
- B. Furthermore, it is required that a student-faculty group of each respective department control the allocation of these funds.
- C. It is also necessary that structures be made available for students and faculty to become involved in the overall fiscal policies of Rensselaer.
- D. Finally, we require a more equitable ratio between student and faculty members in each respective department.

V. It follows that there be full voting participation for students and faculty on all trustee committees.

VI. The President of Rensselaer, Dr. Richard Folsom, is to publicly address the Student Body as to the nature of his decisions in these four critical areas. Specifically, he will offer his reply to the Student Body in a letter addressed to The Polytechnic.