

the university



MANUEL NEIRA

everything and everybody breaks down - Miyabe

"The people in the Wheel" is how Tadashi Miyabe of Waseda University, Japan, refers to authoritarian establishments.

Here as a speaker at the World University Service of Canada national seminar on revolution and the university, he described university administration in Japan as a huge juggernaut.

"The credibility gap is great in Japan between university administration and the student-faculty body," he said. "At Waseda University, where I work, there are 40,000 students.

NO RESIDENCES

"Since there are no residences on campus, students must find somewhere to live among the 20 million people of Tokyo. Most classes have at least 500 students, and the professor must use a microphone.

"The president of a university is chosen from within a group of people who look around and decide whom it would be nice to have this year."

Miyabe drew a picture of a university system, encompassing 1,400,000 students, whose main purpose is to feed trained people into Japan's industrial corporate system.

The result of this type of massive production-line education, he said, was alienation and dehumanization of the individual student.

"Universities open in April. New students come from the country thinking they have

escaped from the pressures of cramming for university entrance. They have high hopes," he said.

MAY CRISIS

"Then comes 'May Crisis'. Everything and everybody breaks down. They are disillusioned and worried. They find they cannot even meet their professor because there are hundreds of people in each class."

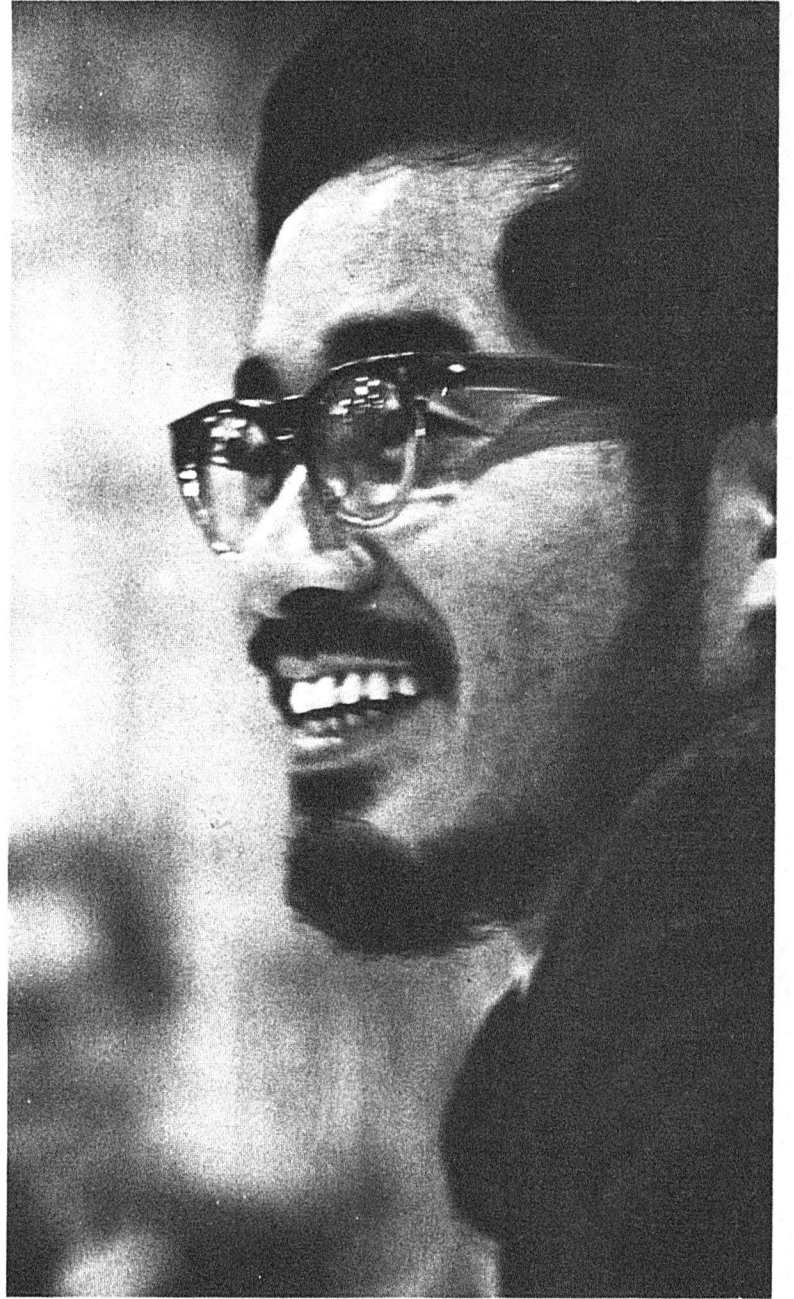
But this year Japanese students, with their American, German, French and Canadian counterparts, are demanding a voice in administrative decisions of the university affecting them as people.

"At Waseda, students are opposing the appointment of the new president. They are refusing to recognize him until a student referendum accepts him.

"But he says there is no rule which permits a student referendum," reported Miyabe.

"However, the underlying problem over the globe at the moment is whether the university is functioning as a vehicle of emancipating human beings. It is up to students at each university to restructure the university form so that it does not just accommodate the demands of the industrial society," he added.

"We at times, as university students, have the illusion we are out of the world, crying against it. This is sheer illusion—we are within the establishment," said Miyabe.



TADASHI MIYABE

... thinking, then action

A memorandum for the Administration

The purpose of this memorandum is to emphasize certain principles and to suggest policies relative to the administration of this University:

PRINCIPLES:

- (1) Agreement must be reached in advance among the student body, the faculty and the administrative functionaries that the university's role as an academic institution has always involved being an instrument for direct social, usually counter-revolutionary, action; that the question is only what sort of an instrument, what sort of action; that it is the duty of everyone in a class society to change its present class nature; that if the Universities Act interferes with this duty, it is to be changed or ignored; and that individual students, faculty members or administrators must use their position of class privilege as a means for achieving social justice both at the University and in the society.
- (2) We must maintain our efforts to achieve an organizational pattern providing for constant communication among students and faculty leading to the establishment of policy decisions which it is the administration's job to carry out as good civil servants. We must allow the administration, we suppose, to "petition" the governing bodies—student and faculty—discretely, but there can be no doubt as to where real authority lies.
- (3) Communications between student-faculty councils and the administration, as well as among students and faculty themselves, will find new forms of organization in the course of their evolution. (And too bad about the Universities Act.)

(4) Communications among all people everywhere must be fostered by everybody, with respect to everything.

(5) Since the existing status quo involves the imposition of the demands of an absolute minority—Board of Governors, Senate, Deans, etc.—on the faculty, student and worker majority (and "due process of law" and "University Regulations" are simply legitimizing instruments of this imposition), progress and change, as has always been the case historically, will depend upon counter-impositions.

Hopefully, change can be accomplished peacefully and genially; but even if this is not possible (and the entrenched positions of our current masters may make peaceful change difficult), it still must be accomplished when socially necessary. At all times do the claims for justice take precedence over "law and order".

Attention is called to the general regulations governing administrative conduct on page 36 of the 1967/68 liberation calendar:

"When an administrator enters the University, it is expected that he will apply himself to the administration of the University with propriety. Should an administrator fail to fulfill this basic job condition, the faculty and students reserve the right to take such actions as, in their opinion, his case warrants. Abrupt termination of contract may be applied."

The normal political invasion or occupation of University buildings or offices by groups of administrators, contrary to the interests and access of the members of the University Community should be recognized as calling for appropriate action by the Student Discipline, Interpretation

and Enforcement Board, and by Faculty Council. The intervention of the Police ("civic authorities", cops, heat, THE MAN, pigs, etc.), it is felt, will not be necessary as the autonomous and democratic structure of the University will facilitate the reasoned and just handling of such breaches of conduct. It is imperative, in the interests of all those who are devoted to the purpose of the University as a centre of critical teaching and learning, that a business-administrative clique not be allowed to subvert these purposes.

Where once the Board of Governors ruled the University, ultimate decision-making should rest in the hands of those who produce at the University: the students, faculty and workers.

The General Faculty and Student Council, having reclaimed those powers presently usurped by Deans Council, has the general supervision of University affairs, including powers to de-bureaucratize administrators through admonition and termination of contract.

Where the "students' union" at the present time is a lackey of the administration (i.e. it subordinates the interests of students to conducting an illicit affair with the administration), a real Union of Students must be created which will fight for power—fight for the demands of its membership through negotiations, and, if necessary, strike action, the power to control.

—John Thompson
—Jon Bordo
for "such as the SDU for example"