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THORNHILL RESIGNS – LEVY PRESIDENT

Anthony Levy, 22 year old third year B.Sc. student became the SRC Fourth President in two years following the extraordinary meeting of the SRC on 18 March, when Miss Penny Thornhill resigned the presidency after only a few months in office.

Penny Thornhill's resignation was the outcome of her having accepted full time employment with a Durban newspaper. Feeling that she could hardly do justice to the Presidency, under the circumstances, she resigned from the position but decided to remain on as a member of the SRC.

The resignation sparked off intense speculations as to who her successor would be. Peter Mansfield, who narrowly lost the Presidency to Miss Thornhill last year, was a likely candidate; another possibility was Richard Johnson. Tim Jackson, present vice-President was also rumoured to have some support. But despite the lobbying which preceded the actual meeting, it was obvious that no one had any idea who would emerge as President.

SRC members appeared jocular, one or two hopefuls seemed tense and fidgety. Penny Thornhill read and confirmed the minutes for the last time in a clear firm voice, and then formally resigned the Presidency. A motion, "That this SRC accepts with deep regret Miss P. Thornhill's resignation as President and wishes to place on record the heartfelt appreciation for her leadership and outstanding devotion to duty during her term of office" was passed amid applause. Mr. Mansfield thanked the retiring President for her leadership in student affairs, and nominations were called for.

More than 7 minutes elapsed before the first nomination came to hand – Tony Levy – nominated by Vice-President Jackson and seconded by Roy Page-Shipp. After a short pause came the nomination of Peter Mansfield, proposed by Neville Herrington and seconded by Gail Fleay. The groups around the table huddled together and Tim Jackson was proposed by John Micklewood and seconded by Richard Fenhalls.

After asking for a minute to decide whether or not to accept nomination, Jackson declined leaving the field clear for a straight fight between Mansfield and Levy. The Council moved

into Committee. Some representatives and the candidates left the room, and twenty minutes later were recalled to be informed that Tony Levy had been elected.

Without further ado, President Levy assumed the chair and the tension relaxed accordingly.

On analysis it appears that Levy drew his support – surprisingly, for he has the reputation of being a died-in-the-wool left-winger – from the right-wing group on the Council. Still more surprising to most students was the fact that he was elected at all, for his rise from relative obscurity to the highest student office has been so rapid and unexpected as to take the campus unawares.

What are his qualifications for the job? In the SRC elections last year, he ran 11th, scraping home by some seventeen votes. But this is attributable to the fact that he was so little known rather than to lack of confidence on the part of the student body. Tony Levy is said to have a flair for administration and if his experience in student affairs is anything to go by, he is certainly well equipped for the position. His list of offices held at Wits and at Pietermaritzburg makes impressive reading:

1st Year Rep. on “Dart Institute for Africa” Committee, 1958; Committee member Wits Chess , 1958; Publicity Officer Wits S.Z.A., 1958; Treasure of the “Auricle”; Editorial Board of the “Leach”, 1960; Liaison Officer “African Medical Scholarship Trust fund”, 1960; Wits Academic Freedom Committee, 1960; Chairman, U.N. (P.) S.J.A, 1959; Secretary U.N.(P.) Chess Club, 1959; Chairman U.N. (P.) Bridge Club, 1961; U.N. (P.) Academic Freedom Committee, 1961; Chairman U.N. (D.) SJA, 1962; U.N. (D.) Academic Freedom Committee, 1962; National Executive Member, S.A Jewish Students’ Federation, 1958-1962; Nation Vice-Chairman S.A Jewish Students’ Federation, 1962; and member Wits S.R.C, 1960

In addition he has served on the S.R.C since August last year and has been local N.U.S.A.S Chairman for the same period.

Can we ask for more?