

11. Dave Morrissey: An Open Letter to John Coburn (CAS Broadsheet, April 72)

#### AN OPEN LETTER TO JOHN COBURN.

Dear Mr. Coburn,

Now that the art world has recovered from the pleasant surprise of your appointment as State Supervisor of Art it seems neither inappropriate nor unreasonable to inquire into your hopes and plans for the long ailing National Art School.

In-particular the following points need clarification :

- 1) Do you realize the necessity for, and are you willing to demand, a basic and comprehensive open inquiry into the validity, necessity and optimum execution of art education?
- 2) Following this of course is the question of whether any decisions of such a forum would be rigorously followed, no matter who was disturbed?
- 3) Whatever happened to the "New Art School"?
- 4) Will you be expanding student participation into decision making on all levels?
- 5) Will you relieve the absurd situation whereby students are so crowded that they work at home only to be told that if they do not use the tech. rooms these rooms will be taken off them?
- 6) Will you abolish the roll system which tends to weed out the less conformist and often more creative students?
- 7) Will you be pressuring for as much free and/or cheap materials of all kinds as needed?
- 8) Will you be pushing for a change from a scholarship structure which gives students the choice of about \$5 per week or a job but not both; which makes scholarships scarce and gravitating towards immediate high school leavers?
- 9) What will you do to remedy the widespread return of ex-students to the staff, which has resulted in congenital lack of change?
- 10) Will there be introduced a programme of visiting lecturers?
- 11) Should not the employment methods be geared to presenting large numbers of varied but good teachers?
- 12) Will encouragement be given to all forms of exchange between the Art School and other institutions and groups both Australian and overseas?
- 13). Will the library get all the improvement it needs?

14) Would you be prepared to use (and risk) your position in the art world to obtain shows for students?

15) How much personal risk are you prepared to take over any and all changes necessary.-

Yours..... D. Morrissey.