

14 February 1975, Mathematics in the school curriculum,  
Dr. Ruth Wong, Director of the Institute of Education.

11 April 1975, The arithmetic of a group,  
Dr. M. J. Wicks, University of Singapore.

25 April 1975, Ch'in Chiu-Shao and the Chinese remainder  
theorem, Dr(Mrs.) Lam Lay Yong, University of Singapore.

#### Inter-school Mathematical Competition

The Society will hold an inter-school mathematical competition on Monday, 2 June 1975. Communications concerning the competition should be directed to the Honorary Secretary, Singapore Mathematical Society, Department of Mathematics, University of Singapore, Bukit Timah Road, Singapore 10.

The deadline for applications is 12 May 1975!

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#### BOURBAKI OR NOT BOURBAKI?

E.C. Zeeman: "...I wanted to make a point about grand treatises like Euclid and Bourbaki, or centralised curriculum reforms. They are splendid in some places, but cannot help being biased in others. Euclid was splendid on geometry, but poor in algebra and applied mathematics. Bourbaki is splendid in algebra and analysis, but poor in geometrical thinking and applied mathematics... These treatises are trying to impose an artificial unity from within, that is liable to stifle growth, whereas allowing free expression to the opinions of many individual mathematicians enables the subject to evolve its own unity from within... Meanwhile these grand treatises can cause mathematical loss, not only as we have seen in classical times, but even today... 'How we can lose mathematics today', you may ask, and I will tell you. By the year 2010 the exponential communication explosion will probably have pushed most books off the library shelves onto tape. Soon after that, or maybe earlier, computer control will be introduced increasingly into libraries, with the automatic WC-instruction, which says: if a tape is neither consulted, nor cited, for 10 consecutive years, then Wipe Clean. So by 2020, sure enough, much of our mathematics will be wiped clean. And then, for the next 2000 years, our children at school will have their horizons bounded by Bourbaki Book I, just as for the last 2000 our forefathers had theirs bounded by Euclid Book I." [1]

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