

EXTRA  
Largest  
Paper



### The Weather

Today: Sunny, pleasant 54°F (12°C)  
Tonight: Partly cloudy, 40°F (4°C)  
Tomorrow: Mostly cloudy, 54°F (12°C)

Volume 119, Number 65

Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Thursday, December 9, 1999

## Bacow Releases Final Report

### October FSILG Rush, Summer Dorm Selection Part of Final Plan

By Frank Dabek  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Chancellor Lawrence S. Bacow '72 released his final report on the future design of MIT's residence system yesterday.



TECH FILE PHOTO

**Bacow** The report calls for incoming freshmen to select residence halls during the summer before their arrival at the Institute, but it preserves the option of dormitory selection during Orientation. Rush for fraternities, sororities and independent living groups will occur in October, and FSILGs will receive reimbursement from the Institute for housing graduate students.

Based mainly on the work of two groups — the Residence System Steering Committee and the student-dominated Strategic Advisory Committee to the Chancellor —

Bacow's report represents a compromise solution aimed at garnering the approval of most groups while working within the constraints imposed by the unpopular decision to require all freshmen to live on campus in 2001.

While the report represents a final decision on the design of the residence system, on many specific points it presents only guidelines or principles. Associate Dean Kirk D. Kolenbrander, who led the RSSC, will head up the effort to implement Bacow's design and fill in many of the missing details.

Bacow will present the report to the student body today at 5 p.m in 3-270.

#### FSILG rush moved to October

Bacow, in concert with the Interfraternity Council's 2001 transition committee, proposes to hold FSILG recruitment activities beginning the first week of October. The report explicitly rejects the oft-proposed IAP rush because of potential damage to IAP's character.

"I think it is a mistake to say IAP is a non-academic time," Bacow said. Moving rush to IAP "would

change IAP to the detriment of students," he said.

William R. Dichtel '00, a member of the IFC's transition committee, predicted that ILGs will participate both in the October rush and in a small-scale spring rush.

According to the tentative schedule in the report, rush would begin on October 5th and extend through October 27th. FSILGs would be allowed to extend bids starting October 20th, and bids would be accepted starting the 27th. Freshmen would continue to live on campus for the remainder of the year.

FSILGs are widely expected to lose membership during the transition to a system requiring freshmen to live on campus. Bacow's design provides financial assistance for fraternities during this period by subsidizing the costs of housing graduate students in vacancies. MIT will reimburse graduate students for 80 percent of the rent they pay to a fraternity in the first year. FSILGs could also choose to leave a room vacant and would receive 60 percent of its fixed cost.

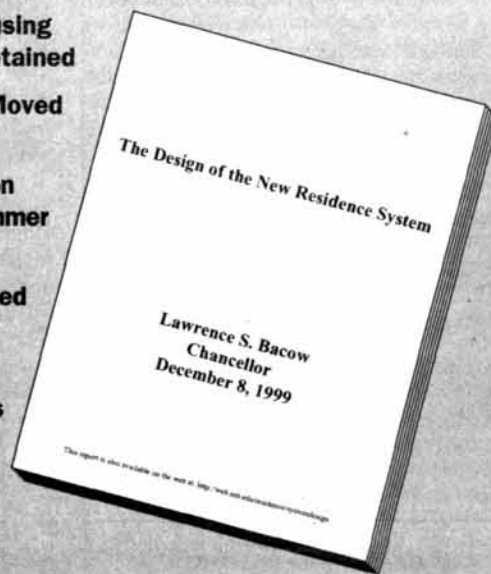
Report, Page 4

## Report Summary

MIT's residential system should try to support three separate objectives: provide students with adequate, clean, comfortable housing and dining; create a comfortable, welcoming environment — in other words, a home; and promote community by stimulating interaction among students, faculty, staff, administration, and alumni/ae. The Strategic Advisory Committee to the Chancellor summarizes these objectives with the shorthand: house, home, and community.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, THE DESIGN OF THE NEW RESIDENCE SYSTEM

- Four-year Housing Guarantee Retained
- FSILG Rush Moved to October
- Dorm Selection Moved to Summer
- Sophomore Shuffle Dropped
- Limited Capital Improvements Suggested



## Initial Reaction Positive

### Bacow Proposal Well Received by Leaders

By Frank Dabek  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Despite the controversy which has surrounded each step of the residence design process, the report on the final design of the residence system has initially been well received by the majority of the student body.

The compromise design suggested by Chancellor Lawrence S. Bacow '72 in his report has won widespread approval, and student leaders were pleased by his use of student input in the report.

Undergraduate Association President Matthew L. McGann '00 stressed the integration of student views, including the Unified Proposal produced by the student-based Strategic Advisory Council to the Chancellor. "I'm very pleased that [the Chancellor] involved student input" in the process, he said. Bacow's report referenced the SAC proposal several times and "pretty much rubber-stamped the IFC's rush proposal."

McGann and other leaders and activists noted, however, that this proposal does not mark the end of student input into the future of the residence system. "He (Chancellor Bacow) has left a lot of room in implementation," he said. The planning process is "nowhere near to where we will have to be in 20 months," he said.

Associate Dean Kirk D.

Reaction, Page 4

## Student Activism Contributes to Residence Report

By Naveen Sunkavally  
NEWS EDITOR

A year and four months after President Charles M. Vest announced his decision to house all freshmen on campus starting in the year 2001, the debate on how to best redesign MIT's residence system has drawn to a close: Chancellor Lawrence S. Bacow '72 released his final report on the "Design of the Residence System" yesterday.

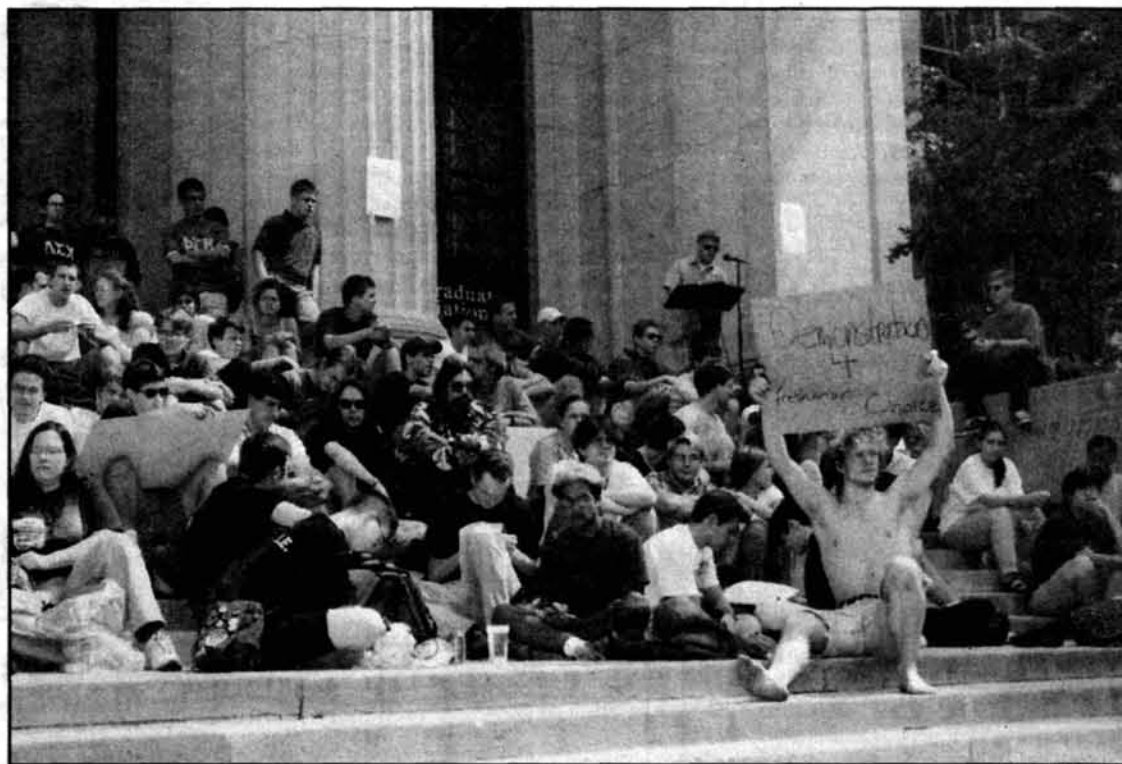
An examination of the events leading up from Vest's decision to Bacow's announcement gives an interesting look into the nature of student activism and administrative reaction during that period of time.

#### Student protest as activism

Vest's announcement initially brought students together to protest in order to try to reverse his decision. Threatened with extinction of their living environments, students living primarily in fraternities, sororities, and independent living groups staged protests to try to reverse Vest's decision. In addition, students were dissatisfied that Vest had made his decision under media pressure, without student input, and at the most inopportune time possible: August 25, the first day of Orientation.

At a student protest on the Lobby 7 steps in September, Jeremy D. Sher '99 blasted the Task Force Report on Student Life on Learning, a report which recommended the housing of all freshmen on campus that was released a week after Vest's decision. In his announcement Vest had cited to the Task Force report as justification for his decision.

Sher, a member of the Task Force, said that in mid-July Sher was approached by one of the co-chairs of the task force who told Sher that the decision to house freshmen on campus was



TECH FILE PHOTO

Many protests were held in response to Vest's decision to house all freshmen on campus by 2001.

"inevitable." Sher said, "When you read [the Task Force report], you see that freshmen-on-campus was just tacked onto it at the end."

On Sept 23, the Interfraternity Council announced its opposition to house all freshman on campus at a president's council meeting. In response to threats by fraternity alumni to stop donations, Vest said, "You can't let yourself be bullied around."

The results of an Undergraduate Association poll held in late October confirmed the feelings of most students towards Vest's decision. Of the 1,148 undergraduates who voted, 1,004 said that they felt it was not beneficial to house all freshmen on campus.

Students continued to protest

through demonstrations into spring this year and fall as well. On April 8, approximately 75 students staged a "Tool-in" to express dissatisfaction with the administration. In the fall of this year, a group called MIT Choice formed, and the group also staged a tool-in this November attended by about 150 students.

#### Groups make proposals

While some students chose to engage in protest, other students and administrators chose to work together to make proposals for redefining MIT's future residence system within the constraints of Vest's decision.

At a faculty meeting on Oct. 21, Bacow announced an IAP design contest on MIT's residence design system. Bacow also described a

Residence System Steering Committee, made up of students and administrators, to judge the contest.

Two teams, The Beaver Dream Team and the Dorm-Design Team, both closely affiliated with the administration, won the contest. Their winning ideas focused on the creation of a strong freshman advisory system and the idea of converting living groups to theme houses voluntarily.

In late April, the RSSC released its own preliminary proposal for MIT's residence system. The proposal furthered the debate among students: it proposed to move graduate students from Ashdown to MacGregor and undergraduates

History, Page 4

# OPINION

## A Commendable Report

Chancellor Lawrence S. Bacow '72 deserves commendation for his report on the residence system. His decisions show careful thought and analysis and incorporate student

### Editorial

concerns. The report provides the best possible alternative residence system for MIT given the constraints set forth by the unpopular decision to house all freshmen on campus in 2001.

Bacow provides solid explanations for his decisions and clearly listened to student leaders. The report frequently cites the student-dominated Strategic Advisory Council's recommendations on the housing system.

While many changes have obviously been made to the MIT housing system, Bacow strives to keep many of the positive attributes of the MIT housing system intact. The freedom to choose one's residence hall assignment during orientation and the guarantee of four years of undergraduate housing are important features of the present system included in the new recommendations. The elimination of the dangerous "sophomore shuffle" is another positive attribute of Bacow's report.

Bacow's recommendations, however, do give some reasons for concern. Although the report is meant to be a final decision on the residence system, it fails to present more than guidelines or principles on many specific issues. For example, a better explanation of how dormitory demand will be managed if not enough students pledge, or a strong, formalized capital proposal to fund these changes, are needed. The generous reimbursement policies for graduate students living in FSILGs are another concern — MIT must insure these new benefits do not lead to abuse.

The administration must also make sure that rush, which

will occur in the middle of the fall semester, does not detract from academics. An IAP rush should be re-considered — it offers available free time and is well positioned in the academic calendar.

The failure of the report to offer concrete plans for a graduate residence, despite calling such a residence one of MIT's most pressing concerns, is also troubling.

Many of these concerns can be addressed through the implementation process. The Dean's Office must provide impartial and knowledgeable leadership in the implementation of these programs.

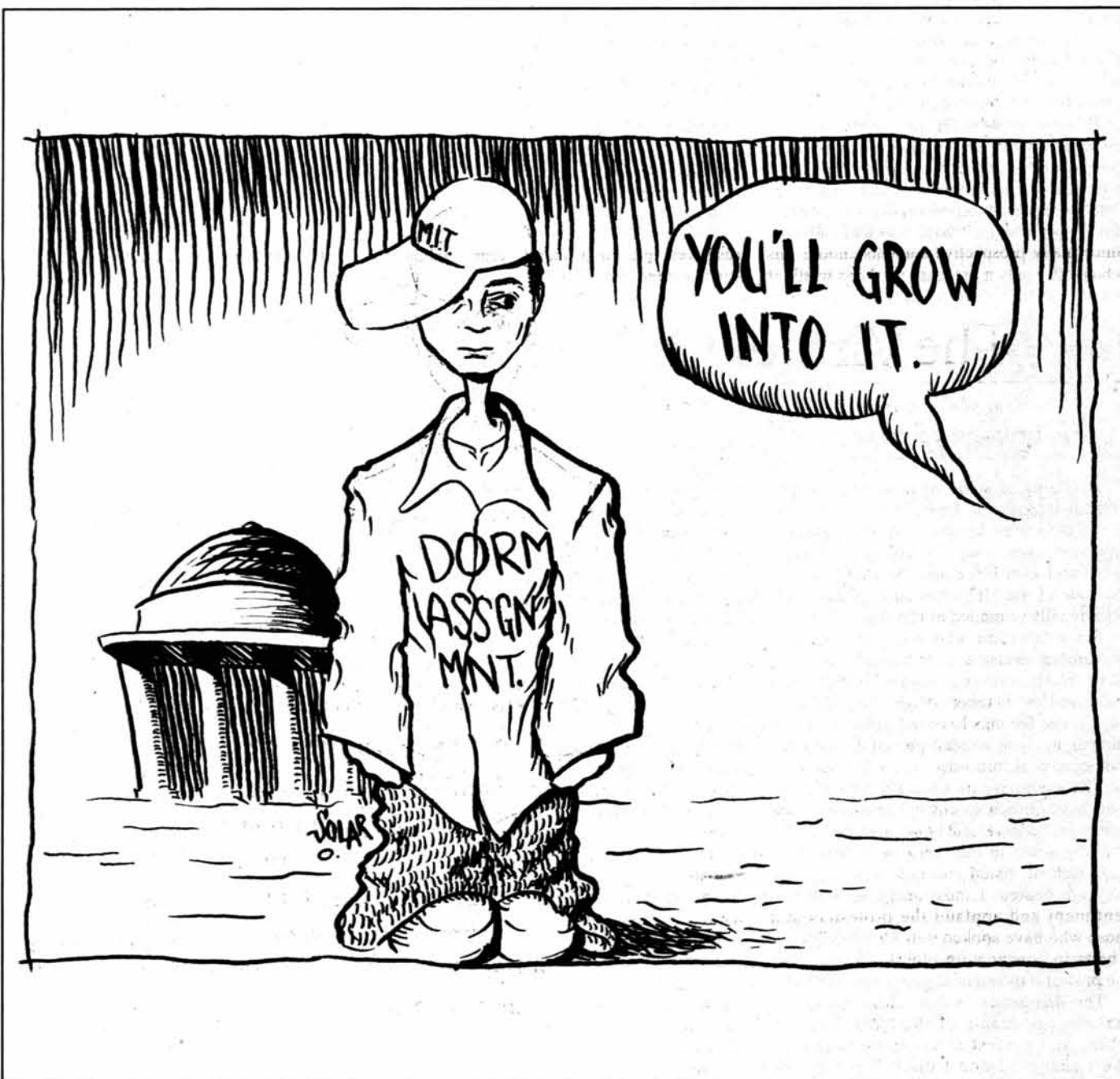
Students, also, must remain involved in the process through implementation. While this report represents a final decision, the time for student input is not at an end.

Chancellor Bacow's report, based largely on student recommendations and feedback, promises positive changes for the MIT student body. Those charged with its implementation must not squander this tremendously valuable opportunity to improve the MIT housing system.

## Erratum

In an article about the Undergraduate Association's allocation of funds ["UA Allocates Funds Held in Reserve," December, 7] a quote attributed to UA President Matthew McGann '00 in reference to building an endowment for student activities should read, "That would require a \$50,000 surplus for 100 years."

The original text misstated the number of years required to accumulate the required funds.



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# You Are Not Special

*Bacow Report Destroys Unique Communities*

Guest Column  
Wally Holland

Chancellor Bacow's report is, after many months, finally on newsstands. According to *The Tech*, the report went through the Academic Council last week; that it is being released on the last day of classes, then, is confusing and frustrating. While the timing of the report is horrid, its content is utterly fantastic. In the short time I've had to review the proposal, I'd like to briefly draw attention to a few points which merit discussion.

In the "Weaknesses of the Current System" section, Bacow writes that the current housing system creates intense loyalty to one's living group. On this point I agree. He then claims that "this loyalty is a product of a system that fractionates each class a few days following arrival on campus. People bond immediately to their living group." I'd offer a simpler explanation: that people who choose their own communities will pick people with whom they get along.

Bacow continues, "However, this loyalty tends to be at the expense of a larger sense of a campus-wide community." If small communities exist only at the expense of large community, then the administration should clearly not stop at breaking apart living groups. They should also attack MTG, the Assassin's Guild, the Chinese Students Club, and LSC. After all, these communities also attract student loyalty and distract students from more important campus-wide community activities such as pep-rallies and alumni donation telethons.

Bacow claims that the current system forces students to make decisions about their living groups hastily, without the benefit of in-person experience. This claim is used to justify an October rush and twice-yearly housing lotteries. But the problem isn't limited to living groups! Since many prospective students choose this school after only a pre-fresh weekend worth of

visitation, clearly such decisions are also misinformed. Perhaps we should require students to live at MIT for a year before being forced to attend classes here; in this way we can make sure that every student makes the right choice.

Bacow talks at length about rejection and its negative impact on MIT students. However, his proposal does nothing to remove the potential for that feeling of rejection; it merely shifts the timing of this "darker side" of the residence system by two months, into that relaxed period right before midterms. It also begs the question of whether these feelings of rejection are as significant or widespread as he claims. Is it really the administration's job to shelter students from what we all know to be an everyday social phenomenon?

Bacow demonstrates his knowledge of digital media with the stunning claim that with "digital cameras, streaming video, and chat rooms, it should be possible to give prospective students a relatively complete picture of life in the dorm". There is no nice way to put it: this statement is completely ridiculous. If chat

rooms and webcams can give a complete picture of life at MIT, why do we bother with pre-fresh weekend or Orientation? In fact, why bother coming to school at all when we get the full benefit of life here over the web?

Bacow places much emphasis on the needs of students who want a permanent residence before they arrive; however, one has to look in a footnote on page 19 for his admission that he has no idea how many students will take advantage of this consideration. On the other hand, we know that 100 percent of current resident students came here without knowing their new address, email or otherwise. However, if it is a problem, MIT is quite capable under the current system of notifying the freshmen of their temp dorm assignments weeks in advance.

On page 22 Bacow warns that, by delaying rush well into the academic year, "potential exists for the entire fall to become a de facto

extended rush." He then goes on to recommend that rush take place during late October — where it has the potential to distract from midterms. In essence, the first half of the year becomes "de facto extended rush." More heartening is Bacow's praise of the FSILG system: those houses have "served us well over the years." It's good to know that they're appreciated, especially when footnote 27 says, "FSILGS have come and gone in the past, and will continue to do so in the future."

One reason for the Back Bay fraternities' existence, Bacow notes, is the "large number of women students in [Boston] colleges." While proximity to attractive co-eds has historically been a concern in major real estate purchases, I would venture to guess it's no longer a deciding factor in most men's living group choices — among other things, I'm sure that most gay brothers would take some issue with Bacow's comment. Any implication that fraternities should move back to campus because there are more women there is a comment worthy of *The Boston Globe*.

Bacow's report misses its chance to be part of a solution to our graduate student housing problem. In my estimation, this makes him part of that very problem.

Larry Bacow's report is another step in our Institute's march toward homogeneity. As our student culture continues to be endangered, we are losing the things that make this place genuinely special. Whether you agree or disagree, you owe it to your community to be at Bacow's presentation today at 5 p.m. and make your voice heard. If nothing else, show the administration that you are listening, and that you have something to say.

Finally, I would like to thank Chancellor Bacow for setting me straight on a potentially very confusing issue. Whereas I had thought that MIT students actually liked some feeling of stability, or of being part of a community with a larger history, he corrects my error: "the only tradition that is truly honored at MIT is change." I'm glad he thinks so. That "tradition" is upheld by his report, to be sure; by turning his back on the most-loved residence system in American universities, he has nicely filled the role of "agent for change."

*Wally Holland is a member of the Class of 2001.*

*Bacow's report is another step in our Institute's march toward homogeneity. As our student culture continues to be endangered, we are losing the things that make this place genuinely special.*

# The Virtues Of Uncivil Disobedience

Guest Column  
Erik C. Snowberg

A friend of mine once wrote a paper defending terrorism. Somewhere in the midst of it was the line, "Sometimes you are just so repressed for so long that you have to break down and kick some ass." When I think of the state of the MIT community today, I am occasionally reminded of this line.

Since President Vest made his freshmen on campus decision over a year ago, there have been varying levels of distress expressed by members of the MIT community. These feelings have led to letter writing campaigns, long winded proposals and even the occasional "protest."

The members of the MIT community who have chosen to engage in these activities have been variously scolded by others, even by some in this very publication, for their lack of vision and not knowing when they are beaten. I must disagree with this sentiment and applaud the protesters and those who have spoken out. That being said, I have to concur with others who say that the protest movement is going nowhere.

The difference is that while many feel that the opponents of the 2001 decision whine and protest about something they can't change, I don't think that they are protesting enough.

The history of protest shows that although almost everyone is opposed to the destruction of property and other sorts of mayhem caused by protesters, it often accomplishes a lot more than any other sort of protest. These forms of protest, known collectively as "non-violent direct action" have been effective tools used constructively by leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi.

A cursory examination of history — even history at MIT — reveals that the greatest and most drastic changes in our society have come about as the result of direct action. In his memoirs, Howard Johnson, President of MIT during the Vietnam War, routinely criticized the tactics of protesters. After reading for a while you began to feel that the only time things at MIT changed, such as divest-

ment from the Instrumentation Laboratory (now Draper Labs) and Lincoln Labs, was after some sort of sustained protest or an instance of direct action.

Even recent history shows that non-violent direct action is an effective tool. Just last week World Trade Organization talks stalled in Seattle amidst massive and sometimes violent protests. Although it is impressive that 35,000 people (by the *New York Times* estimate) showed up in Seattle to protest, without violent and unnecessary reaction from the police which spurred some protesters to destroy stores and otherwise damage property, the protests would have never received the front page coverage it did. This thrust many issues into the limelight, prodding President Clinton to address the protester's major concerns in a speech that would eventually cause the WTO talks to collapse.

A couple of months ago I attended a sit-in hosted by MIT Choice. It was nice to see some people yelling and chanting, but when 2:30 rolled around, the organizers announced that the sit-in was over. By doing so they showed a fundamental misunderstanding of the purpose of a sit-in. A sit-in is supposed to shut down the facilities of whatever you are protesting until they have to deal with your issues or you are arrested. By dispersing the energy of a crowd, they were bound to leave protesters feeling unfulfilled.

Such techniques have been used successfully since labor strikes in the late 1800s. Even recently, students protesting sweatshops at other university campuses have had a great deal of success with non-violent direct action. In one case protesters at the University of Arizona held their president hostage in his office for over 100 hours until he signed an agreement stipulating that no U of A apparel would be manufactured in

sweatshops with provisions to enforce the agreement.

Non-violent direct action would be effective here at MIT since it would scare away donors. Many groups have tried to get their alumni to stop giving to MIT until the 2001 is over-ruled, but alumni donations have actually increased. An article about a protest or even a violent clash at the William R. Gates III building is not the sort of publicity ol' Bill was looking for when he coughed up \$20 million.

According to old professors here, during the Vietnam War, the administration was flooded with letters from alumni who wanted to donate but were concerned that their donations would support a radical campus — a campus opposed to the Vietnam War. Thus, stopping the protests was important to the administration, and made them a little more willing to give the protesters some ground.

Let me be clear that I do not condone or encourage this sort of action. I am a horrible activist. I would enjoy having my neck bicycle locked to a door to prevent entry about as much as I would like to ... well ... have my neck bicycle locked to a door.

Anyone who engages in this behavior should expect to be ostracized by a large portion of the community and have all the resources of the administration turned against them. They should also realize that negotiating with the administration is like playing poker with someone who is always dealt a royal flush; the only way to win is to knock the table over and punch him in the jaw. In the end, it is important for people to realize the tools they have available, and make an intelligent decision on whether or not to use them.

*Erik C. Snowberg is a member of the Class of 1999.*

# A Recipe For Community

Guest Column  
Jeff Roberts

I want to talk about community. As you all surely know, "community" is a buzzword that's being thrown around rather often at MIT, almost as often as "hosage" and "A=B=C=P" (which is more of a buzz-equation, I guess). From the community leg of the educational triad proposed by the Task Force on Student Life and Learning to the "community of love" endorsed by UA President Matthew L. McGann '00, people from around MIT have been hailing "community" as the best way to strengthen the campus. Simply, MIT would be a better place to live and learn if there were a little more community.

Now is where you should ask, "What the hell is that supposed to mean?" Or if you're not fond of cursing, you'd phrase it, "What the heck it that supposed to mean?" But with cursing or without, you realize that the solution can't be as easy as "add community and stir vigorously," for someone has to explain how community can be created. This isn't easy. In fact, people have been trying to create community for a long time now through neighborhood planning and the like. Lots of people have found success by finding good communities and copying their features, but for of all these very smart people, and all their various theories, there is no single agreed-upon explanation of exactly how to make community work. There is no

*Community exists where people say it does .... Go to a neighborhood where everyone says "There's a lot of community here," and try to tell them, "No, you're wrong."*

Fundamental Theorem of Community (which makes it especially difficult for people at MIT to deal with). But I have been thinking a bit about community myself, and I've come up with two really obvious conclusions that I thought I'd share with you now.

1. Community exists where people say it does, and it doesn't exist where people say it doesn't. Just think about it. Go to a neighborhood where everyone says "There's a lot of community here," and try to tell them, "No, you're wrong. I don't see any community here at all." Similarly, if you talk to MIT students who say "I hate how there's no sense of community here," it really doesn't make sense to tell them that there really is a sense of community, they're just not, well, sensing it.

2. Community involves some idea of likeness. I see some community around this campus, but in the form of many small communities instead of a larger one. Living groups and academic departments become communities because their members feel they share common ground. Those many of us who can say "I live in Baker House" or those few of us who can say "I'm in Course 11" can more easily relate to others who say the same thing because they have a common interest. If you think about it, why do people like to hang out with other people and not with antelope? Obviously, it's because people and antelope have very different interests, and their lives are not affected by the same things.

What do these two conclusions mean for MIT? First of all, it means that all we have to do to create community is to convince people that it exists. Perfect. But how do we do that? We could try to find out how to make people feel that they are like other people around here in some way. We have to show people what it is that we MIT students have in common (and I think we all know what that is, don't we?). If we are successful, what we will be hearing is "I'm an MIT student, and yes, we have a lot of community at MIT." Maybe we can even make it into a song. But that's not important. What's important is that community might actually seem very hard because it is, in reality, very easy.

So I'll finish by reminding everyone of one important thing: you can't spell "community" without M-I-T.

# Report Includes Five Years of Assistance to FSILGs

Report, from Page 1

This assistance would decline by 10 percent each year for five years, after which all reimbursements would end.

The report also encourages Boston-based FSILGs to consider relocating to Cambridge. Such a move, the report says, could lead to a tighter sense of community on campus. This plan is only in the "conceptual stages," however, Bacow said.

## Dorm selection moved to summer

Responding to concerns about MIT's often hectic, bewildering freshman orientation, Bacow's design shifts residence hall selection into the summer. During this first phase of the selection process freshmen will be provided with information about each hall so they may request either a tem-

porary or permanent room assignment. All students will receive room assignments by lottery before arriving at MIT, and a student requesting a permanent assignment has the right to occupy his or her assigned room for the duration of freshman year.

Students who request temporary assignments or who are unhappy with their permanent assignment may enter an Orientation lottery to receive a final assignment. A period of "dorm rush" would precede the lottery but, like many aspects of the design, the details of such a rush have been left to the implementation committee.

Jennifer A. Frank '00, president of the Dormitory Council, speculated that a future dormitory rush would be shorter than previous Orientation week residence selection activities and might be compressed into a day or two or held

during a few hours each night.

While dorm rush remains similar for most groups, Bacow's report eliminates the bid process currently used by theme houses inside the residence system (Chocolate City for instance). Under the new design these houses must operate their selection process in the same way as other houses and will not be allowed to exclude specific freshmen.

## Sophomore shuffle dropped

Bacow's report rejects the mandatory sophomore year housing lottery proposed by the RSSC and firmly states the Institute's guarantee of four years of housing to undergraduates. The so-called "sophomore shuffle" was intended to encourage freshmen to leave the dormitory system and pledge FSILGs.

In its place Bacow follows the

SAC's recommendation by extending the housing confirmation process to include regular lotteries each term. This system of regular lotteries is designed to encourage mobility within the housing system.

The ability of the residence system to provide housing for all interested students still depends, in large measure, on the willingness of freshmen to pledge FSILGs and move out of the Institute residence system. The RSSC had responded to this reality by dropping the Institute's four year housing guarantee.

By maintaining the housing guarantee, Bacow's plan relies on the six months of advance notice created by the rescheduled rush to give administrators time to find ways to accommodate any number of rising sophomores. Under the current system freshmen occupy

their rooms only a few days after the housing lottery is finished.

## Capital improvements suggested

Bacow breaks with the SAC on the issue of capital investment in the residence system. While the SAC proposed \$273.5 million over 10 years for direct investment in the residence system, Bacow references capital campaign investments in student life such as endowed chairs for housemasters, support for the Independent Residence Development Fund, and an endowment for athletics.

The report identifies a pressing need for spending money to increase graduate housing but concludes that funds are not available for such a project.

Zareena Hussain contributed to the reporting of this article

## SAC Report a Challenge to RSSC

Alternative Residence Proposal Had Major Influence on Bacow

### Residence System Timeline

#### August 25, 1998

President Charles M. Vest announces that all freshman will be housed on campus in the year-old wake of the death of Scott S. Krueger '01.

#### September 23, 1998

Interfraternity Council announces opposition to Vest's decision to house all freshmen on campus.

#### October, 1998

A poll by the Undergraduate Association reveals that 1,004 of 1,148 students questioned oppose the freshman housing decision.

#### April 8, 1999

Approximately 75 students stage a "Tool-in" to express dissatisfaction with the administration.

#### October 21, 1998

Chancellor Lawrence S. Bacow '72 announces IAP residence design contest, and creates Residence System Steering Committee to judge the contest.



#### April 27, 1999

RSSC releases primary report which furthers student debate. Proposals include moving graduate students from Ashdown to MacGregor and creating "sophomore shuffle."

#### September 8, 1999

RSSC releases final report, revising MacGregor-Ashdown switch and "sophomore shuffle" and suggesting extended rush. Report also suggests that MIT no longer guarantee four years of dormitory housing.

#### October 25, 1999

Strategic Advisory Committee presents Unified Proposal, supported by student leaders, to Bacow. Proposal includes freshmen choosing houses over summer and guarantee of four year housing.

#### November 5, 1999

MIT Choice, a student group formed to reverse the 2001 housing decision, holds another "Tool-in", attended by about 150 students and members of the faculty and administration, including Bacow.

#### December 8, 1999

Bacow releases final report on the "Design of the Residence System."

#### August, 2001

First orientation without rush begins. All freshmen housed on campus.

#### October, 2001

First mid-term rush begins.

#### August, 2002

Class of 2005 sophomore pledges allowed to move into FSILG housing.

History, from Page 1

from MacGregor to Ashdown; it also proposed a "sophomore shuffle" whereby sophomores living in dormitories could stay in their dorms only at the cost of losing their sophomore status in their dorm.

At several forums held after the release of the preliminary RSSC report, students, especially from Ashdown and MacGregor, voiced strong opposition to the plan.

## Efforts in the fall

After gathering community input, the RSSC released a final report on how to redesign the residence system in September. The second RSSC report did away with the MacGregor-Ashdown switch, replaced the "sophomore shuffle" with a lottery, and suggested a rush beginning at Nov. 1 and continuing into the spring.

The report also recommended that freshmen entering MIT choose their residences over the summer, and use Orientation to enter a lottery to change their housing preferences if necessary. However, it introduced the controversial notion that MIT undergraduates might no longer be guaranteed four years of dormitory housing. The RSSC submitted this report to Bacow as a recommendation for his final decision.

In addition to the RSSC proposal, body of student leaders called the Strategic Advisory Committee to the Chancellor also submitted a report to Bacow. The SAC report, called the Unified Proposal, contained a similar recommendation that freshmen choose their houses over summer. The Unified Proposal affirmed its commitment to guaranteeing undergraduates four terms of on-campus housing, and it also made recommendations for capital expenditures and subsidizing FSILGS.

Bacow's final design, formulated over the last two months, and returned yesterday, represents the synthesis of these two reports.

## Changes mirror previous work

The changes proposed in Bacow's current work are mirrored by a 1989 report issued by Professor Mary C. Potter, as chair of the Freshman Housing Committee. Although the report's recommendations were not implemented it called for the pre-assignment of freshmen to dormitories during the summer and a requirement that freshmen live on campus for at least one year.

Former President Paul E. Gray '54, who called the current report represents the first time someone "has thought hard about what a residence could be," said, "If the Potter report had been written halfway through my term I think I would have acted on it and made the same decision at the time."

Zareena Hussain contributed to the reporting of this article

## Report Could Mark End Of Theme House System

Reaction, from Page 1

Kolenbrander, who will be in charge of the implementation of Bacow's report, said, "There is a great deal of work to do ... We will go with small, measured steps at first."

Groups which have been protesting President Charles M. Vest's decision to require all freshmen to live on campus by 2001 view the implementation process as an opportunity to continue the battle against residence system change.

Niko D. Matsakis '01, a member of the activist group MIT Choice, said that the organization continues to be opposed to the 2001 decision.

Matsakis said that the report did not represent a comprehensive decision and that Bacow "underestimates the value of our communities as they exist now to MIT life." The presence of these communities "is crucial to the MIT we know and love," he said.

While Bacow said that he welcomes discussion he added that "we need closure at this point."

Kolenbrander said he was prepared to include students in the process — implementation will "involve students every step of the way," he said.

## Governments in favor of plan

Among the major undergraduate student governments, however, the report received a warmer reception.

William R. Dichtel '00, a member of the Interfraternity Council's 2001 transition committee, said that Bacow's proposed "rush structure is definitely workable for the IFC." Academic stress is a concern with the planned October rush, Dichtel said. While the mid-term rush may become "more pressured than during Orientation," the timing is still superior to IAP, he said. The "IFC was very much against an IAP rush." October rush is "a big victory for the IFC," he said.

Dichtel was less enthusiastic about the report's plans for financial assistance to fraternities, sororities and independent living groups and its recommendation that FSILGs consider becoming co-educational. "I felt the SAC model was obviously more generous. This funding model is a step in the right direction," he said.

Bacow encouraged the change to co-educational fraternities to allow MIT's housing system to better reflect the changing demographics of its student body. Nationals may oppose the switch to co-ed, however, Dichtel said. "System-wide I think there are going to be many fraternities that wish to stay all male or all female, but there will be exceptions to that" as well, he said.

Dormitory Council President Jennifer A. Frank '00 was also satisfied with the plan. "I think we reached a compromise between summer selection and the current rush system."

Theme houses, however, have

protested the move away from a selective rush process since the idea was initially proposed as part of the RSSC report. The groups fear that a lack of selectivity will destroy their unique cultures. Raymond Morales, a resident of Chocolate City said that the report, "calls for a restructuring of Chocolate City in a way we are not prepared to make." "Our community has to die," as a result of the decision Morales said.

According to Bacow, "theme houses believe quite passionately that their future was dependent on the ability [of students] to select" future housemasters. The report was saying "the system can operate in a different way."

Frank said, however, that the changes to rush will have "no profound effect on the culture of dorms."

Bacow was able to win the support of these leaders mainly by integrating their recommendations into his report. Frank served on the SAC, which recommended the system of term lotteries proposed by the Chancellor's report. Bacow's report essentially adopted the proposal of IFC transition committee, of which Dichtel was a member.

## Capital outlays draw criticism

The strongest criticism of the report has come in the area of capital outlays for the residence system. While the SAC report outlined nearly \$250 million in capital spending over the next ten years, Bacow's report makes reference to the \$100 million proposed for student life and learning by the capital campaign but offers little additional spending.

The report doesn't offer "a plan to outline the capital needs of the system," McGann said.

Bacow's plan would offer a "dramatic increase" in the funding available to housemasters by \$50,000 to \$70,000, he said.

Liana F. Lareau '00, a member of the SAC, said that the report needs "to make [capital spending] more of a priority."

Graduate student leaders were unenthusiastic about the report. The lack of support for a graduate residence is "not a retrenchment ... this is a lack of progress," according to Graduate Student Council President Luis A. Ortiz G.

While the report states that graduate housing is "our greatest immediate capital need," it fails to propose funding for the oft-delayed Sydney street dormitory.

Ortiz said that the plan to reimburse graduate students living at FSILGs is "basically a way to house M. Eng students." "I don't see it as a great boon for graduate students."

Dichtel agreed that the program is somewhat targeted at fifth year students. "[The Chancellor] is very open about the fact that M. Eng students" could get the subsidy, he said.

Zareena J. Hussain contributed to the reporting of this article.