DNA ban may cause Baltimore exit

By Mark James

Nobel Laureate Professor David Baltimore and several other MIT biologists may have to leave the Institute if an extension of the Cambridge moratorium on recombinant DNA research is approved.

Baltimore, American Cancer Society Professor of Microbiology, said that MIT [if the ban is extended] would be "the most severe blow of any kind" to his career. He added that, in any case, the ban might have to leave.

Baltimore said that several researchers at MIT that have planned to do recombinant DNA work, but who may be delayed by the Cambridge City Council's decision to require a study until the city could prepare a study of its hazard.

Associate Professor of Biology Philip Sharp, who has also planned recombinant work, said he was "absolutely flabbergasted" by Baltimore's statement, but added that leaving MIT to do this work would be one of his options if the ban is extended.

"I don't want to have to make that decision," he stated, adding that "many things would be taken into account" in making it.

Recombinant DNA research involves the combination of DNA from an organism of interest, such as man, bacteria, or another organism, and the multiplication of the combined segment within the bacterium E. coli. The technique can be used to produce large amounts of any DNA segment for study.

Those interested in doing such work hope that it may yield insights into the mechanism of cancer, but opponents fear that the new organisms formed in the process may provide unknown hazards.

Assistant Professor of Biology David Housman confirmed Baltimore's assessment. Recombinant DNA work is "a vital part of what I'm trying to do," he said. Housman said he would seriously consider leaving if such work were delayed or prevented here. A person must "weigh a lot of different issues" before deciding, he explained.

Housman said that the ban already has had a negative impact on new workers coming to MIT.

Professor of Biology Harvey Lodish, who now has a laboratory under the Cambridge moratorium, said that Baltimore's statements were "absolutely true." If the ban is extended, "I suspect people will either openly challenge the moratorium or take it to court," Lodish said.

At least one Harvard researcher may take another position. Assistant Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Thomas P. Mantis is now on leave from Harvard, as he has been since he was hired. Mahanin plans to tour the South African situation if the ban is extended, "I suspect people will either openly challenge the moratorium or take it to court," Lodish said.

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Commentary

An artistic misunderstanding

By Glenn Brownstein

The recent furor over the treatment East Campus residents have given "Transparent Horizons," which involves the Committee on Visual Arts (CVA), the Campus Patrol, and Ralph Landau, whose philanthropy helped make the Chemical Engineering Building possible, and over art at MIT in general, has prompted me to make a few general comments.

Objections to the CVA's handling of procuring art for the Institute generally center on two arguments, neither of which have anything whatsoever to do with art appreciation. In fact, their prime concern is "people appreciation," if anything at all.

Objection number one: when the CVA places a sculpture, it does so with regard only to its own wishes and without any input from students or faculty who should have some say at least to placement.

I'm not 100 per cent sure that this objection is exactly accurate, as the CVA has claimed to accept input (although ex-CVA head Wayne Andersen specifically that he preferred positive feedback to the more prevalent negative type) from students and the rest of the Institute community. However, there's a very good indication that the CVA doesn't listen.

Objection number two: why does the CVA buy only modern art? If campus acquisitions are to be a reflection of the artistic tastes of the community, does this mean that all of those qualified to make the purchase decisions prefer modern art to everything else? And more importantly, is there any indication that the CVA has claimed to accept input (although ex-CVA head Landau may be a key figure - have anyone who could explain how the CVA has handled its purchase decisions prefer modern art to everything else?

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B-ball burns Brooklyn College
By Glenn Brownstein
The #14 ranked Longy School is over. The age of Maimonis has begun.
With 12 points, a game-high eight rebounds, seven steals, and 10 assists, MIT's senior captain Peter Maimonis brilliantly led the Engineers to a season-opening 76-61 victory over Brooklyn College at Rodwell Cage Saturday night.

The entire Maimonis super-performance was the catalyst, the Engineers demonstrating the kind of team performance they will need this year to win, especially with the graduation of all-time leading scorer Cam Lajeveld and rebounder Peter Jackson 76.

Senior John Cavolowsky hit five of nine field goal attempts and scored 16 points to lead MIT. He will be scoring at center for M, tallied 11 and pulled down six rebounds. Robert Hermsmeier led Brooklyn scorers with 14 points.

In Brooklyn, MIT had an opportunity with comparable height, sure to be a luxury for the Engineers in the rest of the year. Taking advantage of the shorter Kingsmen, MIT scored more than half of its field goals from five feet or closer, and compensated for atrocious foul shooting (64 per cent) by out-rebounding Brooklyn 34-41 and hitting half of its field goal attempts.

MIT jumped out to an 8-0 lead in the game and never trailed. A 24-8 run in the first 15 minutes of the second half, including one streak of 17 consecutive points, gave the Engineers a 32-point lead, more than enough to coast home with the victory.

The remainder of the season promises to be much tougher for MIT, though, as the Engineers face the 1976-77 season with a relatively inexperienced squad.

Three starters, Cavolowsky, Maimonis, and Herman return, and junior Rick Van Etten and Nagem are expected to round out the starting five. The key to MIT's success, though, rests with the bench, consisting of one veteran, senior John Doyle, three junior varsity players, and another San Diego-bred freshman, Geoff Hoffman, a six-foot guard.

Former JV regulars Kenny Stephens '79, Emerson Yearwood '78, and Howard Rung '78 will give MIT's forwards some rest, but their lack of experience will be a difficult problem for MIT to overcome.

With little height, some experience, and little depth, the year could well be a trying one for MIT, especially with opponents like Brandeis University (twice), Tufts, Amherst, and Suffork, who are all expected to be among the top teams in Division III this year.

Yet if increased aggressiveness and the leadership of Maimonis, Cavolowsky, and the other leaders can compensate for the personnel problems, the Engineers may pick up a few unexpected wins.

While the holiday season nears, there's no Christmas cheer for MIT, who must face Division III power Brandeis in Watertown Wednesday night at 7:30, followed by a trip to Hartford to meet Trinity Saturday evening.

The Engineers then rest through the final exam/holiday vacation break before journeying to St. Petersburg, Florida for the Sun Coast Classic January 7 and 8.

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