editors

On Trial

In accordance with Dean Rule's statement, the cases of the thirteen students who were arrested last Saturday's riot are to be brought up before the combined judicial committees of the Corporation and the Student Senate. As the past, the rulings of these committees along with recommendations are to be submitted to the Faculty Committee on Student Expulsion for approval. The magnitude of such a case is very rare on the MIT campus as the committee has full power to expel all thirty-one students and there is sufficient pressure on them to do so.

In a sense, the judicial committees themselves are on trial, not for expulsion but for the reputation of being part of the student government. If they can come up with some sound decisions and recommendations that will be approved by the Faculty Committee it will not only look good in the eyes of the students but will show the Administration that there is something to student government.

However, if the judicial committees become the Institute's scapegoats or fail to make reasonable decisions, we will be back in the same old ring-students and Administration alike have no respect for student government.

letters

March 5, 1957

On Trial

To the Editorial Chairman, The Tech:

I should be very grateful if you would publish the enclosed letter in The Tech. I believe we owe it to the entire Technology community to assure them that MIT is not responsible for the recent demonstrations at Baker House.

Very truly yours,

Murry P. Horwood

Mr. William C. Brannell, Jr.
Baker House, MIT

March 5, 1957

Mr. William C. Brannell, Jr.
Baker House, MIT

Dear Mr. Brannell:

My attention has been called to a statement attributed to you in the Christian Science Monitor for March 4, 1957, relative to the cases of the student demonstration at Baker House on March 1, 2. According to the published account you are reported to have said the following:

"Mr. Brannell was asked to propose a plan for the use of the place in which the demonstrations had occurred. It turned out that the place was not being used at the time and the demonstrations were not in violation of any rules."

I may say that nothing could be further from the truth than the statement attributed to you as one of the causes of the so-called "riot," for it happens that the dining service at Baker House is rigorously clean and sanitary. In fact I consider it one of the cleanest dining services in the U.S.A. And I ought to know for I make weekly bacterial examinations of the eating and drinking utensils, a fortnightly bacterial examination of the milk and cream; a detailed sanitary survey every six months. In addition I make more chemical inspections at least once a week and sometimes oftener.

I am therefore sure that the eating and drinking utensils are clean and virtually sterile; that the milk and cream meet the Boston Health Department standards for bacterial purity consistently; that I have never had any dirt in the milk and cream; that the milk that I have consumed at Baker House week after week has never had any dirt in the milk or cream at; and that the sanitary conditions at Baker House have been consistently exemplary. Furthermore I have in my possession the laboratory reports and the sanitary surveys that support these conclusions.

It may be of interest to mention at this time that MIT has never had a single outbreak of disease since 1943, when the War Sanitation Service was run by Battle Creek College and definitely attributed to any of its dining services. That is a record that cannot be matched by many institutions.

There may be many reasons for the recent student demonstration at MIT, most of which in my opinion are unreasoned and without foundation; but any reflection on sanitation at MIT is not only baseless but is a purely pign of the imagination.

I believe that you and the MIT community and the public at large a feat and unprecedented apologues in this matter. If you did not make the statement attributed to you, a public denial will also be in order.

Very truly yours,

Murry P. Horwood

Editor's Comment: Mr. Brannell and Dr. Horwood are talking about different things. Mr. Brannell was referring to the diet that abounds on the silverware and dishes, whereas Dr. Horwood assures us that if there is dirt, it certainly is clean dirt.

profile

Dr. John C. Schehan

The man behind the new penicillin synthesis is a witty and personable individual who should respond with ease to the national recognition of his achievement. Producing a vital about the size of a pencil stub, Dr. John C. Schehan pointed with modest and a rather amused satisfaction to the fine greenish of white crystals which clung to its inside surface. The substance was penicillin V, one of ten varieties which Dr. Schehan and his associates have just succeeded in synthesizing.

In 1946 Dr. Schehan joined the MIT faculty. In 1951, when he was 56 years old, he received the American Chemical Society Award in Pure Chemistry for his work on Penicillin and for his contributions during the war to the development of the Bactericidal process for preparing RDX, a high explosive which was produced at a rate of 340 tons a day. It has been estimated that this process saved the government $200,000,000 in manufacturing costs.

A native of Battle Creek, Mich., where his father was managing editor of a newspaper, Dr. Schehan became interested in chemistry as a boy through the fascination of his father's laboratory. He was graduated from Western Michigan and received degrees of master of science and doctor of philosophy from the University of Michigan. He was research assistant at that university before going to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1941. He and Mrs. Schehan now live in Lexington, Mass.

Dr. Schehan's team will continue to work on penicillin and related compounds, he said at another interview. "We have cracked the toughest nut," he said, "but the work is by no means finished." Additional areas currently under study include the synthesis of sugar derivatives, the study of enzymes and the synthesis of natural products for medical and other use is Dr. Schehan's specialty. A sense of general organic chemistry he, he says, leads his graduate course in organic synthesis.

"I have always been fascinated by the penicillin molecule," Dr. Schehan said. "Both from a medical and a humanitarian point of view, and also because its synthesis has been one of the clinical problems of organic chemistry." "Penicillin's big advantage over any other antibiotic," he insisted, "was simply that we had more time to study the problem."

"Bringing nineteen years with the molecule," said John C. Schehan characteristically, "was like playing a chess game in which your opponent is always one or two moves ahead."