letters

To the Editorial Chairman, The Tech:

One of the most delusional things about the Institute is the student attitude that the Institute is not spending enough on the students. Coming from a high school which had spontaneous spirit and self-pride, I was really shocked to see that MIT students had spontaneous spirit. It is a bit hard to see the situation, it seems to me, and, since I think that many of the Institute's problems arise from this spirit, I was rather surprised by the content of the February 27th issue of The Tech. The article's "solution" to the Institute's problems is in no solution at all. It is a hedonistic "let's forget it" attitude and solves nothing. It contributes more and more to making MIT 77 Mass Ave. into an office building which we enter at 9 am and leave at 5 where we write on the walls and spit on the floors, where we seek knowledge the day before the quiz and send posters the day before the show. The article is an exhortation to the students to become children again, when we are just getting out our fingernails under the windowpanes of mankind. It sets up conditions for "playing riot," with no regard for reputation (the definition of apathy), and in defiance of "those whose personalities demand the outward appearance of power."

Dean Bale's statement reemphasizes the point that the administration will never pay any heed to the student voice unless it is a man and sensible one. No group of grown men with a school to run is going to take time to please a bunch of babies crying in their cribs and wetting their diapers.

I wonder what kind of pre-election article Lille, Roseman, and Loech would write if we had no student government? They might not have the time running us if we were grade school kids. We are old enough to govern ourselves.

But are we? Ask any outsider who reads our paper if we are.

Sincerely,
Dan Whitney '60

To the Editorial Chairman, The Tech:

I would like to criticize the Administration's attitude towards those twenty-seventh defendants who appeared before the Cambridge District Court without Institute support. Because the Administration decided to ignore us, we are as a whole, the whole MIT community has had to withstand the brunt of some very bad publicity by the local newspapers. Witness, for example, an article which appeared in the Boston Globe on March 13 in which the paper imputed that conditions in Baker House approached that of a brothel. The paper bases its story on the testimony of Office DeVeney and when the defendants (and all personnel at the Office) spoke out in rebuttal the Office's statement did not go into as much detail and description as the Globe would have the public believe.

But the above are other stories, could have been prevented had the Institute taken us side in court. I feel certain that if we had had Administration backing the trial would never have occurred, and even if this unfavorable publicity would never have come to light. The newspapers feel pretty safe in attacking and misquoting 27 unorganized students, but they would shirk twice about publishing something which might have involved them in a suit with MIT. I personally feel that if the Institute feels it must punish those of us who were arrested, it should do it in the courts and if it only has its own buildings and not a Cambridge court.

The Administration has nothing to gain by advertising our actions. There is to be a "Family fight" let's keep it in the MIT family where it can be dealt with effectively, and not let it out in public where it is reported as a joke.

—Sheldon L. Epstein '60

administration's view

This article is intended to present a few of the Administration's viewpoints on the question of dorm rent increases. It is not intended, however, to be an endorsement of such increases by The Tech.

Why has the administration declared that the dormitories must run on a non-profit-no-loss basis? Basic to this is the understanding, though perhaps difficult, that MIT is a poor organization as a concern and that it has no margin to waste. It is the available income compared to the needs of the school in terms of dollars and cents that determines its future. Every year the administration is faced with a rising cost of living manifested in increased wages for the workers, a five percent yearly increase in the cost of constructing new facilities, higher cost of supplies, demand for increased faculty salaries (presently increasing salaries is the main objective of the Institute), with a more slowly rising endowment.

With these cold hard facts slapped them in the face, with needs increasing income, the Budget Committee sits down every February to weigh and balance, to distribute those limited funds instead of distributing them equally and facility equitably and fairly. In doing this they have to consider the greatest good to the whole of MIT for the present and most important, for the future. The Administration's budget isn't final. It has to be approved by the Executive Committee of the Corporation partially composed of the officers of the Institution and two former UAP's, subject to the approval of the corporation as a whole.

With this as background we see why the Ryan Committee backed by the Executive Committee decided that the dormitories must operate on a non-profit-no-loss basis. The justification is that if the dorms lose money, the money to make up the deficit comes from the educational fund. With its limitation the MIT can't afford to subsidize the dormitories from the educational fund and also maintain an equitable and far-sighted budget. This means that the effect non-dorm residents are paying for dorm men and that the future development of MIT is hindered by this yearly drain from the educational fund. Furthermore, it is felt that considering the whole MIT community the money now subsidizing dorms can be better utilized elsewhere. Moreover the Institute is not unique with its break-even policy in the dorms. In a survey of eight comparable colleges, among them Brown and Princeton, all the colleges thought they were operating on a break-even basis though only Harvard, Yale and Columbia did. This survey also showed that after the proposed rent increase and service cut for similar services we will still have the second lowest rent.

The three percent profit made on the dorms is objected to though it may also be considered a three percent return from investments. Therefore, when this money was put into the dorms, the Institute lost a yearly income of $152,000. This represents a real loss to the Institute which again brings up the argument that non-dormitory residents are in effect subsidizing dorm men and the future of MIT is hindered by this loss of income because this money normally benefits all. Thus, the Administration decided that a three percent or $126,000 return from the dorm profits to the proposed rent increase and service cut for similar services we will still have the second lowest rent.

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