Protests and politicians

Elsewhere in this issue (see Letters), we have discussed the question of apathy; but apathy is not the problem on this campus. The problem is frustration.

The protests raised in the recent campaigns for the Student Government have been meritorious efforts to attack an area of campus where the commissary is totally unrealistic; but part of it is unfortunately valid.

Student government, like any extra-curricular affair, requires the support of students who on occasion in the MIT admissions program. Desire alone is not enough to make a solo violinist, or an editor, or a UAP. Ideally, only those who have the skills and patience required for the job should be in the student government.

This school is made up of real people, like other colleges are; we're not all -ous critics. Sometimes he relies on an ability to talk fast; sometimes he rides the coattails of a fraternity brother. His chief talent is his facility at playing the role to its limit. His plans interest him in doing something, not in doing something. Sometimes his own self-confident ego is enough to convince the voters, too. The type does not represent student government; his counterpart is found in every activity, and he is uncommon in his pure form. But the merest hint of his presence can taint the air for some righteous critics.

Stewart Awards

This Monday is the deadline for nominations for the Stewart Awards honoring outstanding contributions to student government. Last year's Stewart Awards were established to pay tribute to the often unrecognized work done by groups, leaders of organizations, or individual members.

The Stewart Awards have filled a real gap; for some time there had been no extensive public recognition for a large majority of hard-working students whose achievements were enjoyed by the whole community. Excellence in these fields should now receive the credit given top administrative officers or student government.

Thus far no many nominations have been filed; certainly there is no lack of qualified candidates. Anyone can make a nomination; we hope that all those who have respect for the accomplishments of a friend will pay him the compliment of offering his name.

Who apply will objectively compare their talents with their companions.

If the protest campaigners acted in sensible good faith, let them show it now.

All the committees need able members of good sense, knowledge, and enthusiasm, and those who are not capable of handling the top jobs will not be turned away. The "glory" of the highest positions may not be a factor; but the real advantages of student government, the experience and initiative, are cooperation, are all very much there. Keep an eye out for the committee openings. They're worth the work.

Frosh mid-terms

Already we have heard some criticism of the new freshman quiz system introduced by Undergraduate Planning Professor George E. Oppenheimer. The new plan, admittedly rather quickly constructed, consists of one round of hour quizzes in physics, calculus, and chemistry, and two each in math, and finally another round of hour quizzes.

Complaint has centered around the two-hour tests; some are afraid that this constitutes an excessive burden.

But since the three tests will be given on Thursday and Friday, with Wednesday off for studying, there should be no problem.

The spirit of the complaint, however, is bothersome. There is implication that the new system will hurt the freshmen. It is said that the Institute is merely "screwing" them. Such an attitude is an insult to the judgment and the concern of the action's proponents.

The main objective of the Institute is to teach the material. Many felt that the alternating one-hour quizzes were actually a detriment to efficient learning; studies made of the quiz cycle and its effect on individuals tended to confirm this.

The new system is an experiment to see whether a comprehensive-mid-term test will motivate the student toward a more methodical study; one method which is simpler than the continuous method of study and a more efficient method of learning than Thursday night cramming.

If the student takes care of his good self he will, as usual, take care of itself. Of course, anyone who found the one-night cram sufficient to pass a test may have to change his habits, and this may be annoying; however, we cannot feel too sympathetic. The results of the program remain to be seen; frankly, anything is bound to be better than the quiz cycle.

Inside Inscomm

The voting membership of the new Institute Committee is almost completely drawn from the Activities Committee. The new Institute Committee will be elected by the new Institute Committee and that the Institute Committee will elect the new Institute Committee.

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The formal Institute Committee reorganization will most probably be held this week before spring vacation. At this meeting the new Institute Committee will elect the new Institute Committee chairman, and the new Institute Committee chairman.

All candidates for these offices should sign the nomination list in the Inscomm office, 50-138. To those who feel an interest in making a contribution to student government.