Changtng a philosophy

Earlier this term a decision was made not to grant tenure to a young assistant Professor of Philosophy named Samuel Todes. Todes, who has subsequently won a Baker Prize for outstanding undergraduate teaching, was a popular and respected instructor. His failure to obtain a permanent faculty position has generated a great deal of bitter feeling among his student friends.

We wish to protest to the judgment of Professor Douglas Richard, Head of the Humanities Department, or anyone else in the academic administration, concerning Professor Todes' ability and effectiveness as a teacher. It is our understanding that the reason revolves around the fact that Todes and a close colleague, Professor Burt Dreifus, represent existential and phenomenological thought. Apparently the decision has been made to build a high-powered department of analytic philosophy at the Institute, and Todes was occupying a spot in the philosophy section that needed to be offered to an analytic philosopher who would help build this. It is a legitimate question to ask why the most able students (who are being directed away from philosophy, the age of specialization and concentration has necessarily narrowed. Perhaps, if the philosophy section of the Humanities Department were attracting more top analytic people, it will also, in time, draw more money and be able to hire existentialists to give the students balance.

In the meantime, the only losers seem to be the undergraduate students who count on the Humanities Department for the broadest possible choice of humanistic educational opportunities. Next year it appears that there will be no courses offered in literature and other humanities disciplines, besides that presently offered in philosophy. Whether or not the role of the Engineering-educated university is to develop the versatile student for the Institute, we feel that the Humanities Department needs to be kept in mind that it is able to serve its present procreation with undermining educational facilities.

After all, if the Humanities Department fails to exert a humanistic influence over us engineers, scientists, and social scientists, what will become of civilization? We hope that the undergraduate students will be allowed to continue the experiences which is used to determine the future of the humanities at MIT.

A change in the philosophy of the administration who passed on Professor Todes' ability and effectiveness as a teacher would still be MIT wits, not NIT-er schools were allowed in. He whoever that might be, fears that

There are people at the Institute who envision building MIT into a full-fledged university. This would mean that graduates would be able to enter fields of literature and other humanities disciplines, besides that presently offered in philosophy. Whether or not the role of the Engineering-educated university is to develop the versatile student for the Institute, we feel that the Humanities Department needs to be kept in mind that it is able to serve its present procreation with undermining educational facilities.

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