Problems of urban affairs challenge Institute

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The vast majority of work on the prob-
lems of the cities have been carried on as
interdisciplinary projects. Major ef-
forts have been put forth by members of
the Departments of Civil Engineering,
Civil and Regional Planning, Economics,
Management, and Political Science.

"Glideway," "Metran"

Relying on computers to sort mount-
ains of data, the Dept. of Civil Engineer-
ing has made important studies of trans-
portation, traffic control, highway safety,
and novel structural designs. Interdis-
ciplinary projects such as "Glideway,"
a high speed ground transportation sys-
tem for 1990; and "Central City Module,"
a high performance urban transportation
system for 1990; and "Central City Module,
an Urban Systems Laboratory, and the
Unusual energies

The Ford grant will allow MIT's partic-
ipation in urban affairs to reach new
degree of success. It will permit the
school, in the word of President Johnson,
to take more action that will unleash
the energies of this institution in ways
that will benefit the city and will allow
the reverse of this process, i.e., that the
energies and vitality of the urban pro-
cess can be captured and adapted to our
academic climate, to enhance the intellec-
tual product of this university.

"We need to channel our financial and
intellectual resources in directions more consistent
with the kind of society we seek to build for
all mankind--Howard W. Johnson, 9-8-67

Further areas

The Institute has also made a decision to
research those areas of urban affairs
where technology is not developed, such
as public housing, education and local
affairs. To adhere a path of communica-
tion between the city and the university
in aid of the study of these non-technical
problems, it is "a necessary condition that
leading thinkers and actors must be
brought together and, in many instances,
must interchange their roles to test and
secure the validity of approach and prac-
tice." This declaration of President Johnson
forms the basis for the other two projects
to be funded by the Ford Foundation.
In order to infuse the actors into the
academia world, the Institute will en-
dow chairs in urban affairs, and bring the
leaders of the cities to MIT to lecture,
teach, and participate in the research.

The third element of the program of
urban involvement will allow the bright and
interested young people, the leaders of
the cities of tomorrow, to participate and
lead a hand in the management of the cities
of today. Under the Fellows in Urban Af-
fairs program, graduates will be able to
derstand urban officials, and bring the
spirit of intellectual curiosa-
ty into harmony with the program involv-
ed in running a metropolis.

"Hell is a city"

To quote Dr. Johnson: "50 years
ago Shelly said, 'Hell is a city, much
like London—populous and smokey.'"
MIT has made the decision that Urban
Affairs can and must be better than
Shelly's London.