Inscumm dispute

The MIT dormitory: Facility or community?

By Jim Smith

The accepted role of the dormitory at MIT appears to be, of providing a place for every student, a hole where he can "be in" as he is and, if he chooses, remain undisturbed by the rest of the campus.

I do not think that it is right that the fraternities should be a monopoly for satisfying social functions. By raising a rent of every room by $600, and channelling the full amount to dorm's social committee, a semblance of social involving might be achieved. Currently, a limited social budget requires that every house function have a door charge. Such a situation encourages the student to think in marginal-values terms, and certainly is not in the interest of the fraternities. By raising the rent the fraternities get a monopoly on socializing the student during that time of his life when he is supposed not only to be training for being adults but also acquiring the social graces which will make him a man when he graduates.

Increase in house tax

The dormitories should move from being more facilities to being social clubs with full implications. The best way of doing this would appear to be removing all inhibitions to social functions financially. By raising the rent of every room by $600, and channelling the full amount to dorm's social committee, a semblance of social involvement might be achieved. Currently, a limited social budget requires that every house function have a door charge. Such a situation encourages the student to think in marginal-values terms, and certainly is not in the interest of the fraternities. By raising the rent the fraternities get a monopoly on socializing the student during that time of his life when he is supposed not only to be training for being adults but also acquiring the social graces which will make him a man when he graduates.

Letters to the Tech

Dorm-comment

To the Editor:

I was pleased to learn of several of the "inscrutability" proposals (Residence/ Orientation Week, dormitory men) as they seem to come naturally to my own ideas, and I am equally pleased to announce that the Dormitory Council has adamantly accepted the proposal. These decisions are part of a larger step toward offering the freshmen a realistic view of living groups. Since we are essentially in the process of drafting the proposal.

I feel, however, that The Tech's analysis of the above-mentioned important proposals of the property management of dormitories is not only incorrect but exceedingly small-minded.

1. The student's role in Residence/Orientation Week will be in the form of a social. The term is used in connection with the freshmen, but rather an effort to make the dormitories as important to the freshmen as are the fraternities. In the past, freshmen have been permitted, even encouraged, to visit the dormitories but in the past those who went to the dormitories have found an empty building. This year we plan to provide the activity which makes a dormitory a living group.

2. In addition to the Dormitory Council Chairman speaking as the "authority" at the meeting concerning the proposal, it is important and unimportant that the two groups worked out a compromise on their own. I feel that the value of the Inscrutability motion should not be underestimated. The motion provides an excellent basis for all discussions and most of its recommendations can be found within the proposal. The Inscrutability motion has been somewhat misunderstood, but not in a factual way.

3. The whole series of events of the past two months, climaxing in the IPC and Denemorum concentration (past and present), where certain changes were made. I feel that this was a tremendously increased willingness to cooperate between the groups and due to the most important aspect of the resolution (which was not mentioned in the article) is the formation of a committee of students and faculty and to study future changes in the structure of Residence/Orientation Week. I sincerely hope that this becomes the greatest accomplishment of the whole proposal.

I feel compelled to comment on the news analysis which appeared above. I believe the article concerning the proposal, although accurate and important that the two groups worked out a compromise on their own, I feel that the value of the Inscrutability motion should not be underestimated. The motion provides an excellent basis for all discussions and most of its recommendations can be found within the proposal. The Inscrutability motion has been somewhat misunderstood, but not in a factual way.

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