Why you got this paper

With all the talking going on around and about college campuses today, we of The Tech feel that most of you are somewhat bewildered by what is, in fact, taking place on "your" campus. This paper has been designed to help you understand what is taking place at MIT as a unique example of the general case.

We have not covered all the issues, but we have tried to give you two views. The cross-section is represented by the regular issue. Hopefully this will show you what is happening in our environment now. The longitudinal view is in our special four page supplement presenting some of the past year's highlights.

Unfortunately we can not send you The Tech free continuously, however if you are interested in subscribing, just fill out the form on the right and mail it back to us. We hope this issue has been valuable.

Time constants for change

Many people lost at the faculty meeting Wednesday. Mike Albert's proposal to abolish Institute requirements was defeated completely, as was the other student proposal offered by Mark Rockoff and Steven Fincus. The CEP proposal, which represented years of faculty effort, lost too. The proposal to form a joint committee to study the advisory system was lost for at least a month when it was tabled. The biggest loser of all, however, will be the entire Institute community if mistrust has in any way been spawned which will prevent future accord between students and faculty on Institute policies.

At the heart of the problem lies the different time scales seen by students and faculty. The faculty see such a period of years A student must spend over half his "lifetime" at the Institute merely learning his way around; the faculty, during which he can effectively promote change is rarely more than a year. Change postponed is easily construed to be change opposed.

A few months ago, a student voted to table the proposal for a committee to study the advisory system, it appeared to some students to be indicating a re-evaluation of the issue. A subsequent motion to the effect that the faculty considered the problem important and worthy of consideration was passed, but it gave nothing concrete to those students who seek an improvement in the situation. Although it was not generally known at the time, the CEP had already planned to discuss the matter Monday. Although the faculty did a very poor public relations job for itself at the meeting, the reasons behind its actions are not incomprehensible. By at least the middle of the month the committee to examine the advisory system came to a vote, it was late and the faculty was restless.

There are changes which must be made. The faculty is understandably confused when it is confronted with four different student proposals, none of which has the clear support of the whole student body, in the space of two months, in addition to one from within its own ranks which has been two years in preparation. The faculty as a whole is probably not yet used to student participation in such matters, and it is not surprising that a fear of being stampeded by a small group of students might arise and breed a reluctance to attempt major reform.

Likewise, it is not surprising that students might mistake the caution which results from faculty unease for intransigence. Much can be done if both sides will try to look at themselves through the eyes of the other. There are changes which must be made. The faculty must recognize the legitimacy of student participation in bringing about that change, provided that it is organized so as to be representative of the whole student body. Likewise, the students must give the faculty another chance to back their good intentions with concrete action.

Let there be Spring

Resistance are planning a protest rally Sunday morning in front the Chapel. We of The Tech feel that this is not the answer.

As is our usual policy, we feel that decisions such as spring should not be left solely to God. This is contrary to the spirit of a university, and to the precedents that the MIT administration has established. We, therefore, propose the formation of a joint committee made up of 27 students, four faculty members, and a member of the Dean's staff (oh, of course, Peter Q. Harris, token student on faculty committees)

We would like to support God's recent move away from winter and into the much more relevant area of spring.