The UA: Can it be revived?

By Les Ginarte

A little less than a month after the overwhelming approval of a referendum calling for the disbanding of the association, what steps can be taken to reconstruct the UA into a viable organization. Perhaps the first point to be examined is that boasted by Steve Elyman '71 in his letter to The Tech (February 18) essentially, time spent reorganizing student government is time spent making a foolish mistake. If any things like education. Elyman's reasoning is convincing, but, the structure and policy-making form for the ideas, undergraduates are making sacrifices. The goal in any reconstruction, then, should be twofold: first, to strengthen the organization of the Undergraduate Association, its structure, and, second, to gain a voice for the Association in the Institute's decision-making machinery.

The Focus

The logical focus of any sort of undergraduate association is the living groups - they form the real center of the undergraduate student body. All other programs (at least, for the underclass) are in fact directed towards them. This is clear to anyone who has spent any time in the cafeteria where the discussion was already going on. The weight, pompous guy with a stupid grin. Nobody gave me a program when I went to have my ID taken. I asked the cat with the phone what was going on and was told that the astronomer-philosopher was being moved to his final throne after the shocks of these repeated defeats, a few student leaders promptly pointed out that it worthwhile and eventually, after a quiet death. Since that time, the Undergraduate Association has continued to operate in spite of its almost total alienation from the general student population.

Why is the UA now in such a brief state? There seems to be two reasons. First, it has become separated from its constituency - students in general seem to have little interest in the UA, and the UA has itself been unable to maintain contact with the undergraduate student body. The leadership of the Association, along with those who "represent" it on Institute committees, have in fact been less-stimulating-to-the-ego ways might be to treat them as one's only real constituents. In any case, the situation is clearly one of a new government has been placed by its lack of authority. First the UA and recognized "student center" have had their decisions questioned on matters of the use of the MIT Student Center. Even where the administrative control has given the Association control over the use of fellows (now and booths in the main corridor), the UA has been unwilling (and to some extent unable) to take effect of its greater autonomy. Alienated from its constituency, the Undergraduate Association has deteriorated to the point where it currently consists almost entirely of a few people who have no interest in the UA, and the UA has been unwilling to listen to their legitimate complaints. The word is that the so-called "government" of this student center has its roots in the UA, and the UA has been unwilling to listen to their legitimate complaints.

At the center of this proposed structure, the Undergraduate Association would be one of several "conferences". It would focus on the needs of student groups and students. Undergraduate Association as a whole. (Some of these committees could be divided into smaller units, specifically, their minutes should be kept and published."

In addition to these "conferences," the Undergraduate Association could offer a number of services to the students that are currently not available. These services could include:

1. A New Structure

The Undergraduate Association would be divided into several "conferences," each focused on a different aspect of student life. Each conference would focus on the needs of a specific group of students, such as those interested in academic affairs, athletics, or community service. The conferences would meet on a regular basis to discuss and address the needs of their constituents.

2. A New Focus

The Undergraduate Association would be given a new focus and purpose. Instead of being a "mouthpiece" for the students, it would become a more active and engaged member of the MIT community. The Association would work with the administration to address student concerns and make changes to improve the student experience.

3. A New Voice

The Undergraduate Association would have a new voice in the MIT community. It would be represented on the Board of Trustees and other important decision-making bodies, allowing it to have a say in the future direction of the Institute.

In conclusion, the Undergraduate Association could be revived if it is given a new structure, focus, and purpose. By creating conferences and committees, and by working closely with the administration, the Association could become a more effective and influential voice for the students of MIT.