By Lee Giguere

MIT, while looking for a new man for the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, sought male candidates and offered the job to at least one MIT faculty member before settling on a Harvard Professor of History as the new dean.

According to Professor of Foreign Literature Morris Halle, chairman of the School's search committee, both President Jerome Wiesner and Provost Ralph A. Rosenblith wanted a man for the job, but Halle explained that a woman with tough experience could be just as good as any man, although several qualified female candidates were scored. MIT's eagerness to appoint a woman to the post may be tied to pressure from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to hire more women.

The same dearth of qualified, interested candidates among black scholars also stymied the committee, although Halle admitted that efforts in that direction were not as strenuous as they had been in the search for a man.

Rosenblith told The Tech that the dean's post was offered to someone within MIT, but declined to say whom. Reportedly, this person was Professor of Economics Robert M. Solow.

The search committee, which first met last December and continued to work until the beginning of the summer, never set up any formal precedents for its work, according to Halle. The names of possible candidates were generally received from friends of the committee members, Halle noted. No formal requirements were set for the job, although Halle reported that the committee had two general guidelines: 1) the new dean should be a person who had stature as a scholar in his own field, and 2) he should have experience as a teacher.

Questions about the comparative weights given to research and teaching, Halle stated that scholarship was considered a necessary, but not sufficient, qualification. He noted that the committee "spent a lot of time discussing ideas about undergraduate education with the candidates." He also said that people from schools that are primarily undergraduate institutions were considered for the post, adding that it was only a coincidence that a Harvard professor was chosen.

Likely candidates, according to Halle, were invited to come to MIT, where meetings with faculty and students were arranged. Halle noted that there was an effort to have the candidates meet "non-establishment types.

Questions about the lack of publicity of the search, Halle replied that he neither made the search secret nor announced it. Inquiries about charges that the search was conducted rather sloppily were answered by Halle with the claim that the committee did a reasonable job and came up with a reasonable candidate. In short, Halle argued that a more thorough canvass of possible candidates would have been extremely difficult, and in all likelihood would have missed some good people anyway.