Residents have always associated rowdiness with MIT fraternities. They have tended to blame all of Beacon Street’s noise on them, although there are dorms and apartments from many other colleges there.

The morning after the famous block party, Dean Sorenson received calls from young residents of Beacon Street, complaining about the noise the students were making at such a late hour. Those letters from residents of the 500 block were sent to the Dean’s office, expressing extreme displeasure at the students’ behavior. One of those complaining claimed that 350 MIT students were involved. Dean Sorenson explained that only 150 of the Institute students reside in the five fraternities on that block.

In the afternoon, some members of the Boston Police Community Relations Department paid a call on Dean Sorenson to make sure he was informed of what had been going on. They were surprised by the implication that he had control over the “dorms” on Beacon Street.

Nobody is completely sure of exactly what happened. According to a member of Sigma Chi, 532 Beacon Street, the party began as follows: At approximately 2 am, someone knocked on his door, and when he didn’t open it, another door was forced open. This person entered and opened a window, found their way into the fraternity, and began playing a record. He was later identified.

BU students yelled out of their windows at the MIT fraternity across the street. The fraternity members in turn yelled out of their windows. The BU students threw some firecrackers at the other students, who threw back. BU students tried to get into one MIT fraternity, a few policemen were called, but they didn’t bother opening the door.

The fact that the police had driven by and did not bother opening the door is one of the IFC’s complaints. The IFC has notified the Faculty, in his correspondence with the Chairman of the Discipline Committee, Professor Elzas G. Pylyposi, on the release of the report, is a red herring. By releasing the report, the Discipline Committee would not be prejudging anything; it would be setting a precedent. It could be demonstrated that the current cases are essentially the same as those to which the opinion applies, thus merely being consistent.

If the principle of stare decisis is followed, the opinions must be available to all parties. At MIT they must be available to the Discipline Committee, so that it can know what is happening in a type of situation, if one exists, and to both the aggrieved and the accused parties, so that they can prepare their cases on the basis of past decisions, and therefore the law, has been.

This is precisely what the Working Group on the Judicial Process to the Committee on Mit Education recommends: A written statement by the Pace Committee, the adjournment (if any), and a short resume of the proceedings. These minority arguments — will be made public. If the hearing is public, the names of the accused will be attached; if private no names will accompany the statement.

"It is important as a basis for similar future cases, and always follow precedent. Even the Supreme Court has reversed itself many a time. It does, however, mean that excellent reasons should be 

Another reason is the suppression of the opinion. If the public knew the opinion, it would not release a document objected to by a majority of the faculty members on the committee, and therefore subject to repudiation by the faculty, as is the case with the Discipline Committee opinion. This is no reason for withholding the document. It is a majority opinion of the Discipline Committee, regarded as the faculty vote on the matter, and as such should be released, especially as the committee voted to do so.

Some members of the Discipline Committee who objected to the report had ample opportunity to write a minority opinion, which should have been released along with the majority report. This is clearly pointed out by Professor Joseph Weizenbaum. A letter to the ECF in The Tech also published in Tuesday’s The Tech. The fact that the dissenting committee members did not choose to write such an opinion shows a stronger case.

Searle Report

The key point is that the content of the report is irrelevant to its release. As Weizenbaum says in his letter, "The opinion in question may be wrong, stupid, misguided, offensive, and otherwise subject to serious and silly objections." Nonetheless, it is a majority opinion of the Discipline Committee, and as such a precedent for similar future cases, and therefore must be released.

Opinion: Common law at MIT

By Drew Jaglom

An aspect of the non-enforcement of the Discipline Committee report published Tuesday in The Tech which has hardly been considered is to do with the basic operating procedures of a legal system. If you confer a judicial system, the Institute operates under a common law system; no one disputes that fact. The basis of the Institute’s common law is in the Rogers Report. In their book, The Nature and Functions of Law, Harold J. Berman and William R. Greiner describe a judicial system as follows: "Where judicial opinions are a procedure for the law and public decisions are binding precedents in subsequent cases."

State Decks

Unless one follows this basic legal principle of stare decisis ("let the decision stand"), and applies previous decisions to similar cases, there can be no way to predict how the judicial system will respond to a given set of circumstances. Essentially, there is no way to predict what the law, in fact, is.

If the principle of stare decisis is followed, the opinions must be available to all parties. At MIT they must be available to the Discipline Committee, so that it can know what is happening in a type of situation, if one exists, and to both the aggrieved and the accused parties, so that they can prepare their cases on the basis of past decisions, and therefore the law, has been.

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