Pledge raids: the rebirth of a tradition

By Paul Schindler

Years ago, there was a tradi-
tion among fraternities on campus
that they "bind a pledge class"
with the "pledge raid." It involved
the surreptitious removal of an
object of symbolic value from
one fraternity house by the pledges
of another fraternity. It had been by
most fraternity people that this tradi-
tion had died at MIT. In the last few
weeks it has become apparent that,
at least among some, the tradition
still alive.

In the last three weeks, the follow-
ing items of symbolic value have
been disappeared from their fra-
ternities, in approxi-
mately this order: three SAE
trophy (including a football
one), the PGD gong, a DTD
flag of the DU house (Fiji is the
traditional nickname for the
traditional flag). These acts of
vandalism have been repeated,
including the paint-

over of the word FIJI on a win-
dow of the DU house. This means
that no unau-

orful member of the house has
ever had first-hand experience
with the raids. Another year,
when $100 in property was
taken from a fraternity, the po-
lace were called in. A
combination of unfortunate events
put a stop to pledge raids.

During the first week of
the beginning of the year, when he
received a phone call instructing
him to go to a nearby hotel and
ask at the desk for a package,

He refused to give it to them,
and called the
Boston Police. The DU people
had been thought by most fraternity
people that this tradition
had died at MIT. In the last few
weeks it has become apparent
that, at least among some, the tradi-
tion still alive.

The tradition has never been
definitely dead: it was within
the last few years that one Bay State
fraternity stole all the
flags along Bay State and
several from Beacon Street,
except for that on the house next
to the raided fraternity,
resulting in an angry
crowd gathered at the wrong
house. This means that no cur-
rent member of the house has

been returned, although several
flag was recovered.

According to the IFC judocom,
the Tech that "we were a little upset
only because we were caught in the
middle of what seems to be a
series of pledge raids.

Gromala explained his sup-
port of pledge raids by noting
that they "bind a pledge club
more closely" and that they ensure
spirit and morale if done in a non-destruc-
tive manner. He also stated that they
should be held only near the
beginning of the year, when he
said they would be more ap-
propriate. Gromala concluded
by noting that items removed
should be returned "as soon as
possible" to avoid trouble.

Experienced observers of the
ingest group among at
least at MIT that the recent upsurge,
first in large-scale hacking and
then in pledge raids, is indicative
of a revival of the kinds of concerns
that occupied most of
pledge's time prior to the
political activism of the late sixties.

Among such recent hacks
covered in the Tech were the
creators on the little dice Novem-
ber 7, the Delta Upsilon pledge on
November 27, the East Campus
explosions November 10, and
the tuition riot September 15.

It is probably too early to tell,
but responsible Institute
officials, while dismayed by the
hacks to date, have expressed
in confidence that the

pledge raids will continue,
and that things may get out of hand, as they did
on occasion in the past, with
hacks taking place as the head of
a trolley car to its tracks and the


raid was stolen property. He refused
to give it to them, and called the
Boston Police. The DU people
called in the Campus Patrol,
and the package was turned over,
and found to be the
missing flag. It was returned to
PLP's PSI.

Another complicated hack in-
volved the disappearance of
the Pledge flag. Its removal from
the house was soon followed by
a batch of letters, then a series
of phone calls that pledge raids are going on.

He should know. It was his
house that received phone calls
which consisted of a voice saying
"Are you guys missing some-
ting?" followed by
"homework answers."