

Task Forces for Engineering Review

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News Analysis

MIT budget problems not new

(Continued from page 1)
the MIT School of Engineering's operations this year (see story page 1), for the most part they have caused only headaches for the MIT administration.

It is difficult to pin down figures when dealing with MIT's budgetary crisis, since authorities even disagree on what a deficit is in MIT's case. Chancellor Paul E. Gray '54, who is responsible for most of the work involved in preparing the Institute's budget, prefers to speak of "a gap" which results in demand on MIT's unrestricted income - tuition, endowment, and other forms of income which are not tied to a specific purpose.

Whatever it is called, the gap or deficit reached approximately \$8.6 million last year (Fiscal Year 1974), with a \$2.9 million cut in the academic budget included. That gap had to be met, with a resulting loss to the MIT endowment of \$2.8 million.

The Institute has met most of its operating expense gaps by cutting away, a little at a time, at expenditures in a variety of areas. Economy has been a watchword, and while, there have been few gross cuts in budgets resulting in large-scale changes in academic programs, belts have been tightened all over MIT to hold down the deficit.

The administration has also tried to augment its economy moves by increasing the amount of unrestricted income coming into MIT. Aside from raising tuition, the best way to do that has been through raising the endowment by traditional fund-raising. While all colleges are always interested in fund-raising, MIT has had a special stake in it during the last several years, and has been making strong efforts to get more unrestricted funds to meet operating expenses.

The same economic effects that make MIT's budget harder to meet, however, also make it difficult to get funds from donors. One truism among development officials, as fund-raising experts are known, is that large donations play the largest role in determining the success or failure to a fund drive. Under the economic conditions prevalent recently, few donors willing to give sizable chunks of money - in the tens of millions of dollars - can be found. Thus for example, MIT is holding up on making any announcement - or even making any final plans - of a fund drive that has been discussed by the administration for more than six months now, while the Institute waits to see what happens to the American economy.

The problems faced by the Institute are similar to those

faced by a number of other colleges, including some of the largest and most prestigious private schools. Columbia University, for example, has suffered from much larger deficits than MIT for several years, and, according to the Columbia *Spec-tator*, continues to face them.

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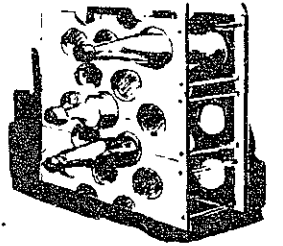
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