Opinion

Who takes over when Jerry leaves?

By Michael McNamee

Presidential succession on a national scale seems to be on the agenda because the nation itself is perhaps the final National American sport. New Hampshire's primary is almost a year away, and the presidential candidates, along with The Tech and The Gettysburgian, have already expressed their opinions about who they think is most qualified to be president. Now it's your turn to take a stab at predicting who's going to be President come January 21, 1976. It's your vote, so make it a good one.

First of all, what does it take to be president? President? Most important of all is the ability to be a Famous Spokesperson. To fit that title, you don't have to be a scientist—Gray's most glaring fault is due to his strongest point: he has little academic reputation. But running over the names, you might turn up some candidates; and one, at least.

With those criteria in mind, let's play the Presidency Game. The most obvious candidate for the presidency is Chancellor Paul E. Gray '54. Gray has many strong qualifications: the '54 after his name attests to a long-standing relationship with MIT, and he helped with the seminal benefit. He has done an excellent job as a top-level administrator in the School of Engineering, President's Office, Dean for Student Affairs Office, and as Chancellor. It is unlikely that a "soft" scientist—Gray's most glaring fault is due to his strongest point: he has little academic reputation—would be accepted by the office.

Alumni and the Corporation, if they have a right to attempt to influence Iranian development, there aren't too many candidates; and one, at least.

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Acceptability accounts for a fifth criterion: the idea that the president should be a man of science or engineering, not a journalist or social scientist. It's unlikely that a "soft" scientist—candidate who would be acceptable to the alumni or even the Corporation. MIT believes what it might say to the world, it is still an engineering school, and it just wouldn't do to have a "soft scientist" heading The World's Greatest Technological University. The alumni, who donate most of the money the president is trying to raise, are probably given a vote of sorts; alumni opinion is certainly a factor in the choosing.

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