The new Undergraduate Association constitution, being offered as a referen-
dum item for student approval next Wednesday, is the result of a long history
of student government at MIT. It represents an attempt by the current leaders
of student government and activities to find a structure which will prove
more workable and meaningful than the one that originally came into
existence 6 years ago.

In general, the new constitution is a very old form of student government
for MIT. It provides for a return to government by an Institute Committee
(Incom) — a group that was abolished when the current constitution was writ-
ten in 1962.

The old Incom reportedly was a very effective form of government. During
the active days of the late 1960s, however, many students felt that the group,
composed mainly of student politicians, did not represent their views
and whose main interests were in student activities, was unrepresentative of
the views of the student body in general.

As a result, the UA constitution was rewritten in 1969 to establish the
Undergraduate Assembly (GA), consisting of repre-
sentatives from living quarters, athletic activities, student governments,
and social events. The GA was to be chaired by the Undergraduate Association President
(or Vice-President, in the absence of the former), who was to serve as the
executive officer of the student body.

The UA was also assisted by an Executive Committee, which was to be
elected at large along with the UA and UAP.

The new system of government borrowed well during its early days.
Student interest in a variety of issues was high, and participation in the GA
was widespread and general. As the issues which had engaged students
cooled, however, the new system gradu-
dally fell into disuse.

The fall of the GA was gradual. Membership was less and less frequent
until under UA Robert Schulte '72
and SRC President Curtis Reeves '72
tried to revive it through 3 or 4 meetings
during the '72 term, but dropped the idea
when interest proved to be low. Since then, the
GA has become a primarily advisory body,
which can initiate changes for the positive,
but which has no means to enforce them.

The nature of student government at MIT has changed in one other important
aspect during this period. With the decline in insecure
student activities, programming and providing entertainment and recrea-
tion has become the largest function of student government — the "social office" —
and many of the outlying groups in student government. The Student
Center, in particular, has become a very important programming body,
both within and outside the MIT community.

Disputes between the new pro-
gramming groups — the UAP's office,
and SCC, and so forth — and some of the
administration at the various parties and Incom vote to accept
the new draft.

The new Inscom is designed to
address those problems. Designed
mainly around an office run by Horn & Wilson, it
will be an important programming body,
necks with the various groups and
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