Iranian nuc program runs into problems

By Mike McNamara

The program to train nuclear engineers for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran has suffered from a number of problems and setbacks since the program's first class of students arrived in June, The Tech has learned.

Difficulties in arranging support services for the students, misunderstandings about the precise nature of the program and the admission of several students who were not eligible has led to a situation where some students have been unable to arrive in June, said Alfred Keil with the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran last March. The program provides for a three-year program in which up to 54 Iranian students will receive master's degrees in nuclear reactor engineering.

The program ran into heavy opposition from students and faculty who objected to MIT contracting with foreign governments for educational services and who felt the training increased the dangers of nuclear proliferation. As a result, the Ad Hoc Committee on International Institutional Commitments was established and met to report in October on its deliberations.

Under the contract, the students were to arrive in June to start their program of study in mathematics, physics, history of nuclear engineering, and English. But some of the students failed to arrive on time - two students did not arrive at MIT until Labor Day weekend, Hansen said - and those who arrived on time apparently were not aware of what was expected of them.

"Two of the students who came in June showed up here one week, then wanted to get doctors, rather than the master's program, and in mechanics."

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New dorm master hopeful

By Thomas Meyer

Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering J. H. Williams Jr., has been named Housemaster of New House and assuming the first black housemaster at MIT.

Williams and his wife Karen say they are enthusiastic about 'the role we might play' as housemasters, and that their ability to get along with students depends on how the problems they will face in the new dormitory.

According to Assistant Dean for Student Affairs Nancy Wheatley '71, the Williams will face three major problems in the new dormitory.

The absence of any "core group" of upperclassmen, which has left the New Dorm without a students' government. Wheatley said all new dorms in the past have attracted a core group of students who organized student governments and instituted traditions. A group of students who moved from Ashdown House to New House "could have played a role, but did not want to play such a role," she said.

The dorm includes three foreign language houses, in which nothing but French, German, or Russian is spoken, and which might become isolated from the rest of the house.

Over two thirds of the dorm's English speaking population are freshmen. Wheatley attributed the unusual preponderance of freshmen on the "staggering merits" of upperclassmen, many of whom "wouldn't move next door for all the money in the world, let alone into another room."

The Williams, however, feel that some of these problems are actually plusses for New House.

Mrs. Williams sees the lack of a core group as an advantage since this gives the present residents the responsibility for setting up their own student government and eliminating "pressure on freshmen to conform to traditions." Williams added that the high proportion of freshmen does not mean that the atmosphere is one of panic.

Williams noted that the foreign language houses "feel it's critical for them to insure that their living environment is such that their students can learn the foreign language," and that once established "they will tend to open up more. They've made it very clear that they are not isolationists."

Although their complete lack of furniture has so far deterred the New House masters from entertaining students, both have spent a lot of time meeting with students in the lounges of New House. Williams relayed playing cards.

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Room deposit return touted

By Eileen Mannix

Room deposits paid by students for their dormitory system should be refunded automatically to the students by the dorm, according to Nancy Wheatley, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs.

However many students have complained that the $50 is not refunded unless they fill out a claim.

The $50 charge is included in the first billing sent to freshmen, transfer students, and any other students moving into a dormitory for the first time. This $50 is held in the name of the student in case of damage done to the room during a particular student's stay, Wheatley said, adding that most house masters bill a student directly in such instances, and leave the $50 intact.

In extreme cases Wheatley said that the room is so damaged that the police are asked to watch traffic and try to prevent students from getting run over.

"We look at how the skill courses were running, and saw that we were not making the best use of our money," Yagika said. "These courses were generally run for about $100 per week, but in many classes we found only about 3 or 4 students. A recent AWARE newsletter, however, claimed that "these courses have been popular with employees and have generally been filled."

According to Yagika, "we found that there were 3,200 people in the Boston area offering similar skill courses in our urban assistance plan would pay for. For enough people are completely unable to attend these courses, MIT can then offer the courses they want to take."

MT has been paying about $74 a day to have a Cambridge policeman monitor traffic and help orient students with the traffic flow at the busy 77 Massachusetts Avenue crossing for the last two weeks. The program is financed out of the MIT Campus Police budget as a necessary safety item - "to help keep the kids from Montana from getting run over," as one Patrolman said.

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