Freshman overcrowding: nothing to laugh about

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ed to the limit, servicing perhaps 500 more students than they were
designed to handle (examples include locker space, activity space, and
dining service outlets).

It’s not inconceivable that MIT will no longer guarantee housing to
seniors, as an attempt to ease the problem, although that measure
could not ethically be taken until next year’s class enters the graduating
year — or 1981.

The key issue here is whether or not this continued overcrowding is
really necessary. Not is it the most expedient, or most easily
implemented solution, but is it necessary to insure the economic health
of MIT? Perhaps it is unavoidable in the eyes of the administration to
force some hardships upon the underclassmen, but it is also a fact the
MIT’s tuition, already nearly the highest in the country at $4000, will
increase further in years to come, and that is the biggest hardship of all.

Room and board rates increase every year, but it is clear that the
quality of the services provided bear no relation to the charges in-
volved.

Last year, Columbia College undergraduates successfully fought a
class size increase, and a number of similar protests have been made
throughout the country in the last couple of years. Perhaps the time has
come, at MIT, to undertake similar action. Perhaps student govern-
ment, so concerned with foreign governments and defense contracts,
could move a lot closer to home and fight for the preservation of
reasonable living arrangements for all undergraduates.

Overcrowding is no longer a subject to be kidded about. It is but the
first step in a chain of events that, in the long run, will not only damage
those who currently attend the Institute, but also those who both
remember and desire an atmosphere where the interests of students
were foremost, not those of cost accounting.

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