COD to hear Picturebook charge

By Mark James

Charges have been brought before the Committee on Discipline (COD) against a student for his part in publishing an allegedly racist, pornographic photograph in the Freshman Picturebook.

A photograph of Grogo, the statue of a gorilla used as a mascot and symbol by Technocracy, bore the caption "Harvey Grogo - Kampala, Uganda." Administrators and deans have noted that a number of staff members and students have come before them to protest the picture and caption as a racial slur against black Africans.

COD charges have been brought against the Picturebook's editor, David Soule '79, by Assistant Professor of Political Science Willard Johnson, according to well-informed sources. These sources report that Johnson has charged that Soule should have realized that the picture would cause injury to many because he is an intelligent MIT student, that his failure to utilize quickly fail the automatic shows that he is a racist and has no respect for the community, and that for his reason he should be expelled.

President Jerome Wiesner and Chancellor Paul Gray '45 spoke out against the picture in Wednesday's Tech Talk, saying that "the symbolism of the photograph has been seen as a racist slur entirely unacceptable in this community. They continued: "We share this view."

Soule himself has refused comment, but many members of the Technology Community Association (TCA) - the Picturebook's publisher - and Technocracy, have said that they feel the entire matter has been blown out of proportion.

TCA signed a letter to The Tech which "was a joke and "was not intended to insult anyone." The letter did not apologize for the publication of the picture and caption.

Gray told The Tech that he had been voiced by a group of staff members who were upset by the photograph, and that he had received a petition in protest of the picture, containing between 150 and 200 signatures.

Steve Lawrence '78, co-chairman of the Black Student Union (BSU), had said that one petition had been circulated by an African student. This petition said that a number of students are dissatisfied with the Picturebook photograph because it showed a lack of concern for a large segment of the MIT community, according to Lawrence.

Carter's Science Adviser interviewed

Press advocates Delaney repeal

Editor's note: This summary The Tech Editor-in-chief William Latshaw interviewed President Carter's Science Adviser Frank Press. Press was the head of the Earth and Planetary Sciences department at MIT prior to his appointment. The interview covered a number of controversial issues in federal science policy. The first portion is below, the remainder of the interview will appear in a later issue.

The Tech: Based on the scientific evidence, do you think saccharin represents a major hazard to the public health?

Press: I'm not a specialist in epidemiology or in carcinogenic substances. As you know, the most recent experiments are two Canadian experiments, one dealing with rats - the rats were fed large does of saccharin, the other an epidemiological study, with a small population that had bladder cancer.

The Tech: Do you support or do you oppose the Administration's position?

Press: I wouldn't go that far. I don't want to put it in a position of the FDA, or the Delaney clause, and I would have to check with my colleagues. The Associate Director [of the Office of Science and Technology Policy] does not follow that. I don't know if the Administration has as of today a position on that.

The Tech: How about your personal opinion?

Press: No. I haven't looked into it enough to say. The Tech: Some have said that the saccharin issue is too minor a controversy. -that it's too low a carcinogen - to base a full-scale moratorium on the FDA, the Delaney clause, and some of the other points of controversy. Do you think we're making a mistake by arguing too much over such a minor isue?

Press: No. I think it's an issue that shouldn't go away. Saccharin will be the first of many. It has just come to our attention because saccharin is so much in the public eye, so we have to confront this dilemma, so we as a government must take action.

The Tech: Then we get into the question of cigarettes - which is not technologically considered a food additive, but the evidence points to it being a carcinogenic substance.

Press: Well, as you know, the correlation between smoking and bladder cancer is very strong. I shouldn't say "very strong," but it has been established. Still, you raise a very good point - that is a dilemma. We do not smoke an ascorbic acid, and not on smoking. These issues I think will be debated from now on until a policy is made.

The Tech: Is it the government's responsibility to tell people what's good for them, or is it the government's responsibility to tell people what's bad for them, assuming they don't want anyone else?

Press: No, I think that it's the government's responsibility to tell people what's good for them, and that's what Congress and I are looking into.