Tom Curtis

**Provost's action went too far**

Thursday night, the Provost's Office delayed a scheduled Purim celebration for Jews. It was a significant action, occurring after receiving complaints about the activity from several members of the MIT community. Although many substantive objections were raised, none of the objections justified postponement of the event.

**Marianity action should not be restricted**

One objection was the desire of the Jews for Jesus to convert traditional Jews through advertising for the meeting: The Association of Student Activities objected to the ads because they did not indicate that the MIT Student Seekers had obtained the room to be used for the activity because the ads billed the event as only a Purim celebration. Others objected to the symbols contained in the ads. The absence of "sponsored by the MIT Seekers" on some of the ads is a minor technicality at best. The event was designed by and for Jews for Jesus, not MIT Seekers. If MIT Seekers had been on the ads, the ads might have been more deceptive, not less.

Some people were offended by the ads because they contain the Star of David. The Jewish Student Union and the Jewish Student Organization believe that the Star of David should not be used for any other group than its Jewish roots. The Jewish Student Union believes that the Star of David should be used only for a religious group that no group shall "engage in missionary activity in an organized way among members of any other religious group." I do not see how MIT can enforce such an agreement when a very important part of the doctrine of some religious groups is the conversion of other people to their beliefs. Missionary activity cannot be restricted without restricting the religious freedom of these groups. As long as the groups act fairly in trying to gain converts, their religious freedom should not be limited.

The weightiest objection to the Jews for Jesus Purim celebration is that the event involves the conversion of traditional Jews through advertising for the meeting: The Association of Student Activities objected to the ads because they did not indicate that the MIT Student Seekers had obtained the room to be used for the activity because the ads billed the event as only a Purim celebration. Others objected to the symbols contained in the ads. The absence of "sponsored by the MIT Seekers" on some of the ads is a minor technicality at best. The event was designed by and for Jews for Jesus, not MIT Seekers. If MIT Seekers had been on the ads, the ads might have been more deceptive, not less.

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