**Student freedom: going, going...**

Student freedom enjoyed unprecedented growth in the late 60's and early 70's. When the right to vote, the freedom to drink, and the freedom from the draft lottery were extended to everyone between 18 and 26, students had the full rights and privileges of citizenship for the first time.

Freedom being chipped away

In the last year, however, authorities have begun to chip away at this student freedom. And so, students have not been as successful in retaining their freedom as they were in winning it.

The Massachusetts State Legislature considered what to do about drunk driving. The legislature didn't consider stiffer penalties for drunk drivers, but tried to educate the public about the dangers of drunk driving. What it did consider was the restriction of privileges of students and the rights and privileges of other adults.

Student freedom is being attacked from another angle in Washington D.C. Various proposals to revise the draft in some form are now before Congress. These proposals would for the first time in history reduce the military to a service other than in the military or in social programs. The draft proposals threaten to limit the most significant student freedom—the freedom to choose what to do with one's life.

The simultaneous proposals to revise the draft and raise the drinking age are very inconsistent. On the one hand, government is entrusting students with the responsibility to defend the country; on the other hand, government is telling students they are not responsible enough to be given the right to drink.

The drinking age and the possible revival of the draft assault two of the three biggest reforms in student freedom. Only the 26th Amendment, which guarantees the right to vote, is welcomed, but this advice should not come in the form of a draft.

On campus, student freedom isn't doing much better. The Freedom of Choice Act of 1972, which guarantees students freedom of choice of how, what, where, and when to eat, has been set back in the wake of the drug crackdown.

Students at other schools have it worse than BU. At Boston College, a cumulative E.R. drug crackdown has been launched by that school's president, John Silber. When Silber saw an article in a campus newspaper which he didn't like, he took away the paper's funding.

What does all this mean? It means that the status of students is moving back to the pre-60's era of restrictiveness. Students are no longer being treated as equals; they are treated as children. Proposed and existing rules tell students where to live, what to drink or wear, as well as what to do with their lives. Compulsory committees mean just M.T.'s way of saying "Eat your vegetables. They're good for you."

In addition, students appreciate their concern for their well-being. But I think students cherish the freedom to live as they see fit. Advice from others is welcome, but this advice should not come in the form of mandatory restrictions on our personal life. We don't need a big brother.

Michael Taviss

**Nuclear industry imperiled**

An onshore cloud hovers over the nuclear industry this week, a cloud that will long alter the face of the nation. The Three Mile Island accident has demonstrated: even when "shut down," the radioactive core generates large amounts of heat which must be dissipated; unlike a coal or oil fire plant, the nuclear plant cannot be operationally turned off.

Still, these questions are likely to be dealt with in the wake of the accident. Only the rights of the nation's nuclear plants were built by Babcock and Wilcos, and while the seven remaining reactors (of a design similar to the Three Mile Island plant) should be shut down for inspection, last week's events do not directly reflect on the integrity of other firms that build commercial nuclear reactors. The result of lengthy investigation into the accident will probably yield additional safety standards and improved designs. MIT gr u tests can play an important role here.

There are other scientific and technical issues involved. An Oklahoma City jury is currently considering whether or not safety standards were lax at the Kerness-McGee fuel plant in Crescent, Oklahoma. The nuclear waste disposal question has not been solved yet, and some scientists feel that is impossible. On the biological side, debate is raging over the effects of low-level radiation on human beings.

But the most distressing side of the accident at Three Mile Island had little to do with science—painfully little, in fact. The accident dramatized the complex social and political interactions, which tend to obscure technical issues involved, and suggested that existing institutions may not be reliable enough to handle such a potentially dangerous endeavor.

**Prior to the Accident**

New England senators pressed NRC's closing of five plants built by Stone & Webster because of an alleged error in the calculations of earthquake stress resistance.

**After Wednesday**

Senator Howard Baker (R-Tenn.), who last year fought to save federal funding for the Clin River breeder reactor, asked the NRC for information regarding the plant's PSA (Tennessee Valley Authority) reactors in his state.

*"In Thursday's New York Times, a quarter page ad by Mobil Co. in part read "Thank you the closings of the fivene Stone & Webster plants;" (Please turn to page 6)