Activism is back

Student activism is making a comeback. On campuses across the country students are protesting against actions ranging from university connections with South Africa to attempts to revise the draft.

Dissent major student issue

Nowhere has student activism been more noticeable than on the South Africa issue. This spring Harvard, Brandeis, and Amherst have all had demonstrations favoring divestment in companies which do business with South Africa.

Dissent became a major issue two years ago when students at Stanford protested for divestment. This event received nationwide attention and soon students at other schools became involved. Last spring a National Rally Coalition Against Apartheid held a rally on the Student Center steps. This spring students at several schools have organized sit-ins and student strikes to protest the South Africa controversy.

Brandeis was the scene of one of the most successful student strikes. In April, near half of the Brandeis student body picketed the anti-April 18 day strike of classes. And when the strike failed to get an administrative response, the students occupied the administration buildings for two days.

Two weeks ago, students staged a similar strike at Harvard following university president Derek Bok's explanation of why the school should not divest. This strike also attracted about half of the student body. At MIT's 3,500 graduate students attended an anti-apartheid rally which accompanied the strike.

One of the most bitter South Africa protests occurred at Amherst College. There students protested acts of racism - including South Africa investments and a burning cross in front of a predominantly black dormitory. The sit-in lasted for eight straight days. The sit-in culminated when the students chained themselves into the administration building for 32 hours.

Many schools have already divested some or all of their South Africa-related stocks. Brandeis, Boston College, Brandeis, and Columbia have all divested some stocks. Recently, Yale divested a million dollars worth of stocks in Morgan Guaranty Trust Corporation because that company does business with South Africa.

State House popular site for activism

The success of the divestment movement has inspired students to protest other seemingly immovable actions. On May Day, college students, including students from MIT - gathered at Government Center to demonstrate against attempts by Congress to revive the draft.

This demonstration was part of a national May Day protest against the draft. While some students were marching, others were signing petitions. At MIT alone, over 300 students signed an anti-draft petition.

Earlier this semester, hundreds of students gathered at the State House to protest another infringement of rights - the Legislature's attempt to raise the drinking age. Although the drinking age was raised to 21, the students' efforts were partially successful. The signed petitions went to the governor's office.

The State House has been a popular site for student activism, mostly because of the politics of its primary occupant. Six hundred students from two of the state's colleges converged on the State House in April to fight proposed tuition increases which would be needed if the dormitory - by occupying the Dean of Students Office - were to be closed.

Students also protested Governor King's pro-nuclear stance following the Three Mile Island nuclear accident. Nuclear power is one of the only areas of social concern that students are not showing a real concern for.

Students have been protesting the construction of the Seabrook nuclear plant since last March. So far, they have been laying construction, if not actually stopping construction altogether.

Sunday, thousands of students trekked to Washington to join in one of the largest anti-war protests ever held.

The reason: human rights

This sudden increase in student activism has many explanations. Some people think it is all part of a sixties nostalgia kick. Although this may be part of the cause, the major reason for the renewed activism is probably student frustration over the lack of respect for human rights.

The divestment issue was so big because students were frustrated by the lack of concern for human rights in South Africa; they see college administrators more interested in the value of stock dividends than in where those dividends come from. And when student protests don't work, students have no choice but to take to the streets.

The draft and the drinking age are direct assaults on student's rights. Once again those in power ignore rights and students take to the streets.

Finally, student activism is so popular because it works. Before divestment protests, no one cared about corporate involvement in South Africa; now everyone does. It's time congressmen, state legislators, and university administrators paid attention to students. If they don't, they can expect to hear from us for a long, long time.

Technique objects to review

To the Editor:

The review of the 1979 Techni- que by Gordon Hafl in the April 27 issue of The Tech contained a number of erroneous and mis- leading comments which we wish to clarify. Two of Hafl's com- ments about Technique are particularly indefensible. At no time has a member of the managing board of Technique obj- ected to copy on the grounds that it detracted from the quality of our publication. Nor has anyone on the board claimed that there is no need for a picture in MIT, writing about. On the contrary, when the board of Technique took over last year, we wanted to en- courage good writing and made a specific appeal for writers in our letter to freshmen. However, un- like many publications, we are not highly structured and a great deal of initiative on the part of the board members is required. Since we do not hand out specific as- signments to our staff, a number of projects are sent out as publications that require pre- ceeding well-defined writing tasks. Despite (or perhaps because of) our flexibility and en- couragement, we were unable to get many people to write for us, and in general we have not been able to enjoy what our photographic quality didn't determine, we had little time to write essays ourselves. It is in- teresting to note that Gordon, aTechnique staffer himself, told us that he would write something, but nothing ever appeared.

As far as depicting the events of the year go, dealing with the specific events that Gordon men- tioned, we did dedicate six pages to the return of football to MIT and a page to the MIT-Wellesley Coalition Against Apartheid. And such events as the grade defusion controversy, not likely to be forgotten by any student, we can't report on, to be fair, student over affected by it, are difficult for us to cover except as a rehash of newspaper stories.

Gordon's criticism of the scar- city of copy is well-merited. We are well aware that more copy would add to the value of Tech- nique, and, despite Gordon's claim to the contrary, we have devoted energy to the written aspect of the book.

He is also disappointed with the photographs in the book, holding that "esoteric architectur- al and form photos dominate the book, while interesting photos of people are few and far between." He had us worrying for a minute, because while we don't keep a tally sheet of people pic- tures, it was possible that such photos may have been in the minority. We checked the book, discovering sections like ads or the senior section, where we can't help but include people, and 2/3 of the pages had photos that were concerned or around concerned with people. The 1979 Technique which Gordon praised so highly, contains only slightly more peo- ple pictures. It also contains ten pages devoted to the architecture and MIT, compared to the eight pages which Gordon found to op- pressive this year.

We cannot take exception with Hafl's evaluation of the photo quality and content in Technique, since after all it is a review. We don't agree, of course, and urge anyone interested to take a look at Technique's photos for themselves. And remember, if you are interested in writing for Technique, please come by. Maybe next year we can do Gordon proud.

Bill Hofmann, Editor-in-Chief
John Legewig, Photo Editor
Technique 1979

Provide deeper discussion

To the Editor:

The cartoons presented on the opinion page of the May I issue of The Tech approach issues of vital concern to the Third World community. The Paul Hubbard cartoon is a greatly one-sided depiction of the Cheddie incident at Wellesley. The Peter Peters car- toon which may make a valid comment on the nuclear stations in Zimbabwe, is at face value, no offensive caricature.

Unfortunately, these cartoons fall very short of making a logical, understandable statement. They are no substitute for a sensitive discussion of these issues. If The Tech does intend to provide a forum for these issues and pre- tend to serve the intellectual needs of the MIT community it behooves you to supply information of greater quantity and quality than you do at present. We would certainly appreciate it.

David Bywater '79
Bobby Joe Anderson '81
Richelle Hemphill '79
Kim Mattallino '82
Douglas Gilmore '81
April Waters '81
Don Carlos Burnett '82

By Kent C. Massey

Oh no. I forgot what I had to do next; this is as far as I saw in the movie.

Paul Hubbard

Oh no, she fell over.

I can't even remember what it said to do in the Sex manual, Ruby Kenan has one I can look at.

Steven F. Fron: '80 - Chairman
Thomas Curtis '80 - Editor-in-Chief
Kathryn E. Grego '80 - Managing Editor
Pamela Sanders '80 - Photo Editor
Bob Wasserman '80 - Executive Editor
Volume 93 Number 23
Tuesday, May 9, 1979

The Tech (ISSN 0148-9007) is published twice a week during the academic year and weekly during MIT recesses, weeks during summer recess, and once during the last week in July for $7.00 per year Third Class by The Tech, 84 Massachusetts Ave. Room W20-482, Cambridge, MA 02139. Third Class postage paid at Boston, MA. Non-Profit Orng. Permit No. 59730. POSTMASTER: Please send all address changes to our mailing address: The Tech, 84 Massachusetts Ave. Room W20-482, Cambridge, MA 02139. Telephone: (617) 253-1641. Advertising, subscription, and accounting services available. Printed by Charles River Printing, Inc.