By Alan Lichtenstein

Although questions of constitutionality have yet to be answered, men born in 1969 have four days left to register with the selective service or face maximum penalties of $10,000 and/or five years in jail. Males born during 1961 have a one-week period to register starting next Monday.

The reinstatement of draft registration has caused a dilemma for many 19- and 20-year-olds in the Boston area as well as the rest of the country. Anti-draft groups have sprung up in the area to protest draft registration. Yesterday in post offices throughout Boston, protesters were handing out leaflets advocating various methods of civil disobedience against draft registration.

Protesters surrounded the main post office in Post Office Square in Boston, holding a rally and a sit-in to protest draft registration. Violence erupted on several occasions led to 27 arrests. The situation settled down later in the afternoon, with just a large number of pickets and police blocking off streets surrounding the post office. A Boston police official commented on the rapid diffusion of the protest by quipping, "They've never seen a protest before. A fellow knows no conscience."

The scene at the MIT branch of the Post Office was much different from that of the Boston branch, there were no organized protests, no long lines, and the most pressing problem all day seemed to be a shortage of registration forms sent by the government. Contrary to rumors, registration forms are being processed by the MIT branch of the Post Office.

The Dean for Student Affairs office has been set up as an information center for students requesting counseling about the draft and is compiling a list of qualified counselors for students to consult if they plan to set up a file as a conscientious objector.

Dean Robert Randolph said that the Dean's Office is "not specifically taking a position on the issue. We will help students make informed decisions. We feel that right now they [the students] may be fighting the wrong battle at the wrong place."

In addition, counseling from the MIT chaplain is available for students considering applying for conscientious objector status. MIT will refuse to release lists of students to the government if such lists are required to enforce registration. Students are allowed to change their ID number to a number other than their social security number if they so desire in order to deter government efforts to track them down.

Libby Peralk, 32 of Students Against Registration for the Draft (SARD) said her group's objective was to make students "think twice before they register." SARD members were out in force in front of post offices handing out leaflets advising 19- and 20-year-olds of their options regarding draft registration.

The options basically were:

1. Registration in full compliance with the draft law
2. Registration with the intent never to serve if drafted
3. Note-registration

Students choosing option 1 need just to go to the post office and fill out a simple form. Students intending to register with the intent of evading the draft at a later date would go to the post office and fill out the form, but not give their social security number. This would make the task of tracking the applicant down more difficult.

Selective Service employees characterizes this as the most risky form of draft evasion, the one with the highest conviction rate during the Vietnam War.

Students advocating non-registration are liable for the same penalties as those persons just registering. Historically, few persons who fail to register are prosecuted; most are caught in a 30-day period in which to register or they are prosecuted.

Student fears of registration were summed best by a student walking up to the MIT postoffice. After he filled out the form, he asked, "So when do we die?"

Peter Richardson said that he expected the final figure to be "slightly under 1000" by the beginning of the term and said he was hoping for a final figure of 900 by Registration Day.

Associate Dean for Housing Robert Sherwood indicated that a class size of 1100 would result in a crowding figure of about 140 in the housing system — 30 more than last year but still below the all-time high of 152 two years ago. Sherwood added that this figure lends to a good first rush. Richardson said that the percentage of women was at all-time high of 24. That of minorities was about the same as last year. He noted that "the number of blacks was down a bit from last year."

The Academic Council had set a range for this year's class size of between 1000 and 1050. Since 1978, the class size had been set by the Academic Council at 1050. Vice-President Constantine B. Simopoulos said the high freshmen yield "came as a big surprise throughout the circuit." He said that all the Ivy League schools were experiencing unusually high yields and very few had gone to their waiting lists.

The raising of the class size by the Academic Council is in preparation of eventually sustaining a class size of 1100, after the new West Campus dormitory is completed next year.

The new dormitory, currently christened Next House, was planned to allow MIT flexibility to offer housing to transfer students and reenrolled students, who currently have very little access to campus housing. Richardson said that ideally MIT would be able to alleviate the crowding situation and offer housing to transfer students.

He said that with the high yield of freshmen this year, neither of these objectives was possible. He called the situation "highly undesirable."

Richardson added referring to MIT's policy toward transfers, that "the final chapter has yet to be written on the policy for the new dorm." He said that policy would probably be discussed further in the dorm near completion.

The decisions in this area would have an impact on the final class size to be set by the Academic Council. Currently projected to be set at 1100.

Sherwood said that this year's freshmen yield may simply have pushed the class size to 1100 a year earlier than was planned.