The Selective Service System has begun to acknowledge the registration forms received from 19 and 20 year-olds this summer. Many people who registered this summer chose to withhold their Social Security Numbers from the Selective Service System out of concern that the identifying number was being too widely distributed. Selective Service Director Routier indicated over the weekend that registrants who withhold the number would not be prosecuted. The acknowledgement letter which these registrants are now receiving from the Selective Service System purports to state that they will be in violation of the law unless they supply their Social Security Number.

It seems the government has decided to make life difficult for those registrants for whom the decision to register was most painstaking. Registrants who decided to withhold their Social Security Number were, by and large, those who gave the most thought to the question of the pros and cons of registration and therefore chose to comply with that part of the law they felt was justifiable. Are these people, many of whom complied with the law despite grave reservations about its wisdom, to be branded criminals because of their desire to protect some measure of their privacy?

The answer is no, or not yet anyway. Registrants who receive letters asking for their Social Security Numbers have three options, according to Dr. Louis Menard of the Provost's Office. They can supply the number. They can withhold it outright. Or they can write the Selective Service System and claim that since they are party to a lawsuit they would prefer to withhold the number until the suit is decided.

Insight from the Mondale visit

Politics return to MIT this Thursday morning in the person of Vice-President Walter Mondale.

For the last five years, during the recently concluded Lebanon-Lebanon conflict fundraising drive, MIT has been out of the national political spotlight as its leaders scrambled for badly needed contributions. True, Presidential Advisor Frank Press did hail from Tech. But MIT as an institution has been taking a small holiday from national leadership in education and research.

Mondale’s visit here on Thursday may mark something of an end to this hiatus. He has chosen MIT for an address on educational and national goals. While the speech will probably emphasize science and technology policy, citing the speech at MIT is a not insignificant statement about the role MIT once played as a forefront American institution, and may begin to play again.

Coupled with the inauguration of our new President, Mondale’s address may begin to outline the role MIT may play on the national scene in the next few years. His choice of subject matter may be enough to show what national issues are as concerned with in the eyes of the Federal leaders.

The speech may be a bit early for those students who have to contend with drinking problems on Wednesday nights. But the student body should be sufficiently interested in the role the college plays in national policy and politics to make that sacrifice. Insights into MIT’s role as a political institution are rare and this one is not to be missed.

Opinion

The magic Number

The 1980-81 school year has begun with three major changes from previous years. We have a new administration, led by Dr. Gray; we at least freshmen have mandatory commons for the first time in over a decade; and we have the worst crowding of the dormitory system in history, which leaves several freshmen without permanent housing. It is clear that the latter two changes are caused by the administration of the Institute and thus are due at least in part to Dr. Gray.

In the realm of crowding, Dr. Gray has added in setting the policies of the Institute for a number of years, and has some responsibility for the larger class size, even though admissions for this year were done before the new administration took power. Furthermore, the housing problem has not been fortuitously addressed by the administration. NRCS and the basement of Ashdowln House cannot be considered as acceptable housing, even on a temporary basis. Although hotel space has now been offered to these freshmen, the hotels chosen are not convenient to MIT. There are several more convenient hotels that could be used; rather than placing students there, it is less convenient to MIT. The administration should be explaining why a congestion plan (including reservation of hotel space) was not developed when the larger class size and number of returning upperclassmen became known.

Crowding will not affect freshmen alone. Common areas in dormitories, and throughout the Institute (for example, lab facilities), are becoming more crowded, and simply are not sufficient to meet the needs of all students. The problems outside the dormitories can be attributed solely to the increase in class size, and the administration must accept responsibility for them.

Mandatory commons is another area where the administration has not acted. Mandatory commons was presented as one facet of an overall plan to improve tech dining efficiency and quality, i.e., for one, actually (Please turn to page 5).

feedback

Boycott Gray’s inauguration

To the Editor:

The 1980-81 school year has begun with three major changes from previous years. We have a new administration, led by Dr. Gray; we at least freshmen have mandatory commons for the first time in over a decade; and we have the worst crowding of the dormitory system in history, which leaves several freshmen without permanent housing. It is clear that the latter two changes are caused by the administration of the Institute and thus are due at least in part to Dr. Gray.

In the realm of crowding, Dr. Gray has added in setting the policies of the Institute for a number of years, and has some responsibility for the larger class size, even though admissions for this year were done before the new administration took power. Furthermore, the housing problem has not been fortuitously addressed by the administration. NRCS and the basement of Ashdowln House cannot be considered as acceptable housing, even on a temporary basis. Although hotel space has now been offered to these freshmen, the hotels chosen are not convenient to MIT. There are several more convenient hotels that could be used; rather than placing students there, it is less convenient to MIT. The administration should be explaining why a congestion plan (including reservation of hotel space) was not developed when the larger class size and number of returning upperclassmen became known.

Crowding will not affect freshmen alone. Common areas in dormitories, and throughout the Institute (for example, lab facilities), are becoming more crowded, and simply are not sufficient to meet the needs of all students. The problems outside the dormitories can be attributed solely to the increase in class size, and the administration must accept responsibility for them.

Mandatory commons is another area where the administration has not acted. Mandatory commons was presented as one facet of an overall plan to improve tech dining efficiency and quality, i.e., for one, actually (Please turn to page 5).

Waiting for the promises

To the Editor:

Where are the renovations the MIT housing office promised the dormitory residents this past spring? We wonder what happened to a completed deck at New House, expanded food storage areas in the Burton House and the New House kitchens, the country kitchens in Baker House and East Campus, and the new game room in East Campus. We are told they have been delayed. At a recent meeting with Gene Brammer, he urged us to remain hopeful. How long should we remain hopeful?