The dilemma

Seven days left.

While many American voters greet this statistic with no small amount of relief, some face a significant dilemma in the week ahead. A large fraction of those taking the 1980 election particularly seriously must decide whether they will vote to avert disaster in the next four years or to force change over the next decade.

This election may well determine whether Federal election laws will permanently eradicate any serious or significant bid by a single party or the two major parties. The Democratic and Republican candidates will each have received $34 million thus far to fund their runs for the Oval Office. Under present law, major party and independent candidates will receive nothing unless they have received five percent of the vote cast.

I have a number of significant minor candidates this year, among them John Anderson, Ed Clark and Barry Commoner, on the ballot in at least 40 states. If, in a year where voters are strongly divided by the candidates with the ones presented them, none of these minor candidates can qualify for Federal recognition under the Federal election laws, none ever will. We ask, if minor candidates are ignored this year, will they ever be taken seriously? And more importantly, if none receives Federal funds will any ever be able to compete against the two heavily-subsidized major candidates?

The choice presented by these two men is little short of apocalyptic. Reagan's well-known opposition to abortion, ERA, the minimum wage and to strong Federal support of education and R&D are important to members of this campus, and his simplistic arguments. Likewise, Carter's action on draft registration and his ambivalent support of student aid concern us as much as his difficulty in mobilizing rational will. Both major candidates seem to fail either on the economic or the foreign policy front. It would have been a welcome sacrifice for him to have been swept into office.

In short, American could probably do better. Americans should decide the option of having a viable and significant alternative candidate to vote for. This option will vanish if the election turns out in favor of Reagan-or Carter or Carter-Ne
topen. The independent candidates, ignored and boxed, will have become ineffective sacrificial lambs on the altar of the future of our laws, Federal election subsidies, and the Two-Party System. Future apathy will be the result, and not to be easy to control.

What is needed next Tuesday is a large and definite protest vote to demonstrate the desire of the electorate that their options be not limited to the Democratic or Republican line.

It is not a decision we make lightly. To cast a protest vote for a minor candidate is to leave the Carter-Reagan decision totally in the hands of the two major parties. It is in the hands of those who can live with either of the two men who is elected, knowing he has contributed to the continuance of choices outside the major parties.

In short, the difference between a Carter and a Reagan presidency pales beside the difference between an America legally restricted to two candidates and one where voters are offered choiceable choices. For a voter to enter the voting booth, look at the two major candidates and reject them in favor of a better future may be the most positive action possible this election. It is a decision to think and vote against the future.

The Tech will attempt to publish all letters received, and will consider columnists willing to risk an editor's decision, that a protest vote could lead to the candidate with the best chance of realizing legitimacy and reaching the financial plateau of five percent. In politics, money is everything, and until the candidate who takes issue with us shows that an independent or third-party candidate is not a one-way trip to disaster, the most attractive candidate in this respect is Rep. John Anderson of Illinois.

Therefore choose, not unanimously, to endorse the presidential candidacy of John Anderson.

Stephanie Pollock

STS program seeks niche

Buried near the back of the MIT course catalogue is a listing of classes with designations beginning "STS." More and more students are finding out that the Mu

ters stand for Science, Technology and Society. Few, however, know what the words actually mean.

Editorsials, which are marked as such and printed in a distinctive format, represent the official opinion of the Tech. They are written by members of the Editorial Board, which consists of the chairman, editor-in-chief, managing editor, and news editors.

Columns are usually written by members of the Tech staff and represent the opinion of the author only, not necessarily that of the rest of the staff.

Letters to the Editor are written by members of the MIT community and represent the opinion of the writer.

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