Teach-in speakers urge nuclear disarmament

By Andrew Washburne

The forum of Concerned Scientists held a convocation Wednesday in Room 26-100 as part of a national teach-in focused on the threat of nuclear war. The capacity crowd heard from prominent scientists, government officials, and university faculty who, during two sessions, focused on the effects of nuclear war and who urged actions aimed at averting such a conflict. The afternoon session was chaired by MIT Institute Professor Emeritus Victor F. Weisskopf, and Francis E. Low, MIT Provost, presided over the evening gathering.

The ten Concerned Scientists sponsored Veteran's Day teach-ins at 151 campuses in 37 states. The Cambridge-based group claimed that each conversation drew substantial audiences. The MIT event was co-sponsored by the MIT Disarmament Study Group, the MIT Faculty Disarmament Group, and the MIT Committee on Concerned Scientists.

The five-hour morning focused on education, as many speakers cited the need to inform American citizens about the consequences of a nuclear exchange. Weisskopf, MIT Professor of Physics Bernard F. Felt, who is also editor in chief of The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, and former Director of the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency Paul Warnke each pointed to a need to convince national decision-makers of the existence of substantial incentives to play a freeze on the production of weapons.

Concerned with a perceived sense of complacency regarding nuclear war was voiced throughout the conversation. Weisskopf responded to recent statements by Reagan Administration officials by saying, "We must not assume that nuclear war can be forestalled, survived, or won." Low expressed a similar concern, remarking that most people are "unwilling to face the terrible danger" which, if left unresolved, "will bring about the world's end." Quoting a statement made by former Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev 20 years ago, MIT Professor of Nuclear Science David Rose '50 described the aftermath of a nuclear confrontation as "a world where the living would have to decide whether to eat or fear and lack of a sense of security by many countries, including the US and the USSR. Provost Warnke reiterated his continuing support for a "no first use" agreement, noting the "overriding mutual demand for commitment."

The evening conversation was distantly momentarized as Provost Low attempted to introduce Paul Warnke. A young man jumped to the speaker's platform, handing Warnke a paper which he claimed was a subpoena for Warnke. Seeing the microphone, he claimed membership in the Mass. Pro-Laborant War Crimes Tribunal of the United States. The Cambridge-based group claimed that each convocation drew substantial audiences.

The Marine Corps celebrated its 206th birthday on Tuesday with a party in the Mezzanine Lounge. (Photo by Gerard Weatherby)

Professors cite harms of WI

By Tony Zaminian

In anticipation of a discussion on the Whitehead Institute at the next faculty meeting on November 16, thirty-three professors have signed a letter expressing deep concerns about the proposed relationship between MIT and Whitehead.

The debate over the Whitehead Institute is "the biggest thing that's concerned MIT in my time here,... in 28 years," said John Buchanan, Biology Professor, a co-author of the letter.

Although MIT delegates will be in the minority on the Whitehead Institute's board of directors, Whitehead will greatly influence MIT's biology research. The Whitehead management would initiate searches for joint faculty members "primarily on the basis of their potential value to the research programs of that organization," according to the letter. "They believe that such a close tie [with Whitehead] would be contrary to the best interests and academic integrity of MIT."

"We're not against the Whitehead Institute by any means," said Buchanan, explaining that the group only opposes the current conditions of the agreement between Whitehead and MIT. "We're anxious to have the Whitehead Institute here, but not under conditions that might threaten the academic freedom and traditions of MIT."

President Paul Gray '54 and Provost Francis Lova declared that "the worries [about Whitehead] are based on worst-case scenarios, unfounded, and materialize," in a letter sent to all faculty members. The letter included the proposed agreement arrangement between MIT and the Whitehead Institute.

Buchanan discounted Gray's claim and added: "Please turn to page 2."