Middle America lends hope

(Continued from page 4) For the American economy as a whole can be equated with the sum of the individual economic successes that other regions in the U.S. today; South Florida, Northern California, if monies from the sale of marijuana and cocaine continue to deluge the Miami area, and international business continues to relocate elsewhere in the South and West, and if American industry moves from the geoforsaken frozen wastelands of North and Midwest, and if Americans would just realize the joy and, yes, value of the culture of marci- dades that prevails in so much of the latituded South, then America would be well on the way to a re- nationism in every meaning of the word. Or so the argument goes. In putting forth their deeply flawed logic of social transformation, proponents of regionalism (or, really, migration to the south) neglect to mention that the new centers of crime, both domestic and international, are the megalopolis of the South, Miami, Houston, and Los Angeles. They forget the pitiful sight of our nation's aged waking away in a condition of utter mental vacu- and complete ambivalence to- wards the final value of their lives in nursing homes and retirement villages throughout the sunny South. They viciously ignore the fact that so much of Southern economic health is founded on the exploitation of political and economic misery throughout the Caribbean Basin by way of cheap labor. And they see the glass towers and chilled shopping villas of Boca Raton, Coral Gables, and San Bernadino County and call it sophistication, culture, the post life. The most pernicious and damning element of the new American regionalism is its un- conscious, but necessary, wish to see the Midwestern United States suffer to the benefit of the South. Whether in the guise of recruiting trips by Southern governors and mayors to Northern industrial centers to encourage relocation, or in the insinuation, ludicrously, that Northern cities will soon be the reigning members of the trashheap of his- tory, those business and govern- ment leaders in the South and on the West Coast in favor of South- ern dominance of American po- litical and economic affairs should be aware of the conse- quences of their ill-considered ac- tions. Are they aware of that chorus of geopoliticians that its destruction of the heartland and the favoring of the peripheral gives rise to a fragmentation and weakening of the whole? Do they sincerely believe that a Southern Florida dependent upon Latin American economic condi- tions, and a Texas reliant on oil revenues, corporate relocations, and investment by corrupt bank- ing practices can define and sus- tain the American dream over the next decade? If their answer is in the affirmative, then this sup- posed foundation of American regionalism is just another lily example of throw-away from capitalism, except that its object to be calcuated in this case is the welfare of some 75 million people and the agricul- tural power of the United States. Regionalism is often a signif- icant political process that people have begun to panic and give up hope. I do not think that the current economic mal- icious this country is sufficient for rejecting an entire re- gion based on temporary setback. On the contrary, I believe that a replacement of any sustained American recovery has to be cen- tered on the world character of so many Mid- western communities has allowed people there to bear the current hardship with an equanimity un- heard of in Washington, Miami, or Los Angeles. To be blunt, I have found Midwesterners to possess a strength of character and faith in common sense wholly or in the insinuation, the personality of many other Ameri- cans. A Midwestern community could be, by an act of leadership and desire to create a new set of economic and cultural conditions, the source of a reconstituted America.

Corrects error in article

To the Editor:
The article on the proposed MIT/Wellesley double degree program has an unfortunate er- ror I would like to correct. The program being considered is for double degrees, not joint de- gree. The student would transfer to MIT (under the same admissions process as other transfer students) and then would satisfy requirements for two degrees (one at Wellesley, one at MIT) in much the same way an MIT stu- dent can, at present, earn two bachelor's degrees in two depart- ments at MIT. Thus, the contemplated program, composed in spirit to present practice at MIT.

Professor Robert Silbey