Race is important

Opinion

Feedback

To the Editor:

I am writing in response to Robert E. Malchman's "Letter from the Reader," Feb. 1. I defend The Tech's policy of identifying the race of people involved in a story if it is relevant, and I support the ex-dissident Assistant Dean for Student Affairs Mary O. Hope. I agree that Hope's dismissal affects minority interests greatly, and I explore a minor issue - the Tech's handling of stories.

The Tech has run several stories on campus diversity in the aftermath, most of which gave reasons why this affected minority interests. An editorial (Dec. 6, 1983) urged that the Institute choose a minority successor or look back.

I agree that when the race of people involved is relevant, it should be mentioned. It seems in- consistent, then, that although it is clear from most of these stories (by implication and accompanying photos) that Hope is black, no one mentioned that Dean Shirley M. McBay, who hired her, also black. This casts a new light on the story, as it makes it seem more likely that non-racial-related reasons were involved in the dismissal. The fact that McBay is black may not be of paramount importance, but it obvi- ously does, and therefore should have been editorialized.

Joseph Shipman '82

Appreciate differences

Editor's note: The Tech re- printed this open letter to Anne Lamottude '83 regarding her letter in the Jan. 25 '84 concerning Robert E. Malchman's "Letter from the Reader."

Dear Anne,

Thank you for explaining to us how to appreciate the many differences and the funny in his article about France. Now we may begin to understand what that is! In particular, I appreciate your emphasis on humor in this article, which is a being a typical example of American humor for too subtle to possibly be understood by anyone of non-American background. Yet, instead of being funny, this whole story is actually pretty sad, because somebody having had the privilege of being involved in one of the most beautiful regions in the world comes back only able to write about the backwash and pinching on the street. Sad, be- cause the world steadily gets smaller and the interaction between the diverse ethnic groups increases, many people seem to narrow-minded and ignor- ant. This is the case in the past century. I saw you have every reason to be because you have to be proud of this country. However, you have to be proud and express it properly without putting other nationalities down.

If you want to be like home, stay home. If you de- cide to travel, please try to open up your eyes and your mind. It is so easy to criticize United States, France, Japan, or Nigeria, where- ever you go, and find things that are not right or at least do not seem right to you. What is so hard to do is to open up your mind and appreciate what the different cultures have to of- fer. In one country it might be

the wealth of opportunities open to you, in another the closeness and togetherness of the family, in yet another coun- try the ability to create designs of great beauty. With a little patience, you will find that every culture has some- thing to offer, and that is worth considering.

And even more, it is quite possi- ble to be proud of your own cul- ture and at the same time realize that certain things might actually be as good if not better in other countries.

We seem to live in a time of great intolerance. It has become so fashionable to poise out the mistakes of others which conve- niently distracts the attention from our own faults and what ought to be done about them. It is also very popular to prevent any discussion by putting your adversaries into small boxes labeled "racist," "chauvinist" or "racist" as if these few words could possibly describe a whole culture or even a single person. It is so much more complicated to make so much more challenging, so much more promising: We all have a lot to be here and there is a lot from each other and what is more important, we all will have to learn from each other in order to keep on living in a world will future for us.

Anne Marie Krahe Loras G

Editor's note: Malchman's column mentioned no mention of dog excrement.

There is no "housing"

(Continued from page 4)

The attempt to control the price of "housing," called rent control, is the idea of rest control. The idea of rest control is to place an upper limit on the rent a landlord is allowed to charge for an apartment. Rent control inevitably leads to a shortage of apartments. If the landlord loses money on the apartment, there is no incentive to sell the apartment, or he can cut costs by skimping on maintenance. He will not just passively lose money for very long, and he will not front the money to build anything new.

Rent control, therefore, simulta- neously cabs both the price of an apartment and the number of available apartments, while re- ducing their quality. If the Cambridge City Council wants more "housing" in Cambridge, they will have to ease up on rent control. Attempting to put the squeeze on MIT will not accomplish anything.

It is important to realize that MIT has been putting up with this nonsense for a number of years now. Cambridge- ians are not only unfriendly to academics. They are also unfriendly to the students. The Cambridge City Council and the "neighborhood" organizations seem to enjoy portraying them- selves as Davids to MIT'S Golli- th. But if the Cambridge City Council is not careful, we may tempt them to go where the natives are friendlier.

North Cambridge, for example, is being very friendly toward high-tech industries. If MIT were to move lock, stock, and barrel in the Research Triangle area, we might get a very warm welcome, with none of the hassle about zoning laws and the like. Then, as the Route 128 industries began to pack up and move, Massachusetts and Cambridge might come to realize that MIT really was not so bad, after all.

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