To the Editor:

Never mind what goes on in the smoke-filled rooms. As far as the public mind is concerned, political success is determined by one's ability to project an appealing image. Given a credible background, and barring substantial faux pas, the candidate who can capture the imagination of the voters can capture their hearts.

Today, the contents of the public mind are given to us by the media.

Said William F. Buckley's National Review of 1/25/85, "...Whatever else may be said about Jesse Jackson, he is not boring...nor does he ever seem frozen. He talks to people. He makes contact. He comes across in technical terms, he comes across in technical color...".

Left-liberal journalist Andrew Kertzd has also become excited by the Jackson campaign. Kertzd sets forth the notions of his praise to the Jackson movement in a front page article in The Nation (Sept. 26, 1983) called "Black Power in the Age of Jackson." The revore is creating such a stir because he speaks in a language of powerful images. We still do, these many days, remember Glenn shouting "gobbledy-gook" and Monday morning back "baloney" at the New Hampshire debate. According to the Christian Science Monitor (Jan. 19, 1984) Jackson "has deliberately provoked by Glenn in order to give his campaign a chance to "really stir," as his advisers feel he does when he shows his indignation..." As an image projection goes, that achievement must be considered a recognition of Jackson's comment that, "Blacks will no longer be the Harlem Globetrotters of the Democratic Party." Or again, "In 1960, most blacks were living an apathetic existence in the United States. Some people lost their lives to change that. ...now we look at students who are looked at black, plastic, and unmoved...twenty years ago to vote, just to vote, was a dream." The power of black populist prosely is not new in America, nor is its widespread appeal. James Weldon Johnson was a leading light of the post World War I Harlem Renaissance of arts and letters. In the preface to his book God's Trombones, he expounds that before 1776 there were famous black preachers going about thear country, nothing to blacks and whites. He adds, "...the most famous of these earliest preachers was Black Harry, who during the revolutionary period, accompanied Bishop Asbury as a drawing card and profited from the same platform with other members of the Methodist Church. Of him, John Leifman in his History of the Rise of Methodism in America says, "The truth was that Black Harry was a more popular speaker than Mr. Asbury or almost anyone else in his day."

While Americans do not want an easily excitable president, we do want one who can appeal with feeling to a sense of national purpose. By bringing the methods of the black preacher, the moral appeal, into this year's presidential campaign, Jackson may well show other the candidates the means with which to take public political discussion beyond the projection of image to the matter of substance.

W. E. Cobb '84

Jackson likeable

To the Editor:

It is unfortunate that Robert E. Macklin's article "Home is where the water runs" Jan. 29 contributes to the stereotyped ideas that so many Americans already have of foreign countries, and France in particular. We feel it is necessary to reestablish some truths about issues raised by Macklin.

As an example, although some of the student dormitories in France might not look like the smoke-filled rooms in Paris, there is good reason for comfort that Macklin requires. It should be remembered that food and lodging are currently cheap, and that, in addition, French universities are tuition-free. By the way, the toilets a la Turque (which are rare), as toilet with a full seat or a colonic, do have the major advantage of being more hygienic. In fact, bathrooms in France in general have an extra piece of sanitary equipment, totally unknown in the United States, the bidet.

Most of the arguments given by Macklin are totally irrelevant to the point he tries to make. Paris being cold in the winter (which is a surprising ascription from someone who tried frigid winters in Boston, much different from Paris where it rarely freezes) does not have anything to do with the academic standard of the Sorbonne. The general level of French academic standards actually seems to be perfectly acceptable when you consider the fact that most French students at MIT obtain, without cheating, their master's degree in one year, contrary to the pace of other students, despite the many problems of adaptation they actually face when they arrive at MIT.

Furthermore, we believe that we French, have as many reasons as Americans to be arrogant. Our famous culture, for example, which Macklin is totally oblivious of, and which has nothing to do with dogs in trains and his friend being pinched (we would have looked for dogs in trains and his friend being pinched), no matter how much it seems to indicate a lack of concern on his part, with dogs in trains and his friend being pinched.

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