A new method of advising

To the Editor: Advising freshmen and women is fun! Every year a thousand or so virgin minds arrive on campus. They are not yet touched by the cynicism which unfortunately affects quite a number of upperclassmen. Our sophomores, juniors, etc. can be divided into two groups — those who are here to buy an MIT degree with the minimum of involvement and those who are truly members of the community and who give of their best and therefore get a much better education. Fortunately the latter are in the majority.

Freshmen, however, are not yet so divided. They arrive eager for two exciting experiences — to meet and learn from interesting faculty members — role models — and to meet and learn from interesting peers. It is our job as faculty advisors to ensure that they reach both objectives and that they develop into members of the involved group of upperclassmen.

Some of my colleagues and I have found a very effective and interesting way to handle freshmen advising. We combine the advisor's role with teaching a discussion seminar to the same group of freshmen. The seminar is reserved for our freshmen advisees and for freshmen only, since they tend to get overawed by the more vocal upperclassmen.

I like to limit the seminar and hence the advising group — to six to eight people, but everybody has his or her own view of group size. This scheme has two important advantages: advising becomes a painless and automatic process, since one sees the freshmen every week anyway and does not have to find them in some SDI does not need to be perfect to accomplish its objectives

To the Editor: If the Devil, the boss of the Evil on this earth, gave a talk, I would not miss it, expecting the Devil's views to be unique, misunderstood and misrepresented. Those who view Lt. Gen. James A. Abrahamson '55, director of the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization, as the Devil have already got it. I attended the General's talk last Thursday at Faneuil Hall. Now, I was not disappointed in my expectation that his views would be unique, often misunderstood and misrepresented.

Many now view the Strategic Defense Initiative as a chimera. Yet, it is the General's opinion that, in fifteen years from now without SDI, the Russian leaders might view our second-strike system as a chimera. Working towards it is the Russian accumulation of always more numerous, always more powerful, and always more precise atomic missiles. This endless accumulation, which makes our second-strike system increasingly vulnerable, makes no sense... unless the Russians are trying to reach the conclusion that, by striking first...