Scientists speak against SDI

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It percent of the MIT Physics Department signed a petition re-

questing approval to accept an SDI project. The only one who did not

sign the petition said he declined because he firmly believed

the program, Cowan said.

Cowan strongly encouraged SDI to take a stand on SDI

by resigning from SDI. President Paul E. Gray '54 said

in an interview that MIT would not be

able to accept a position as a political instrument

or endorsement of SDI. Cowan said that MIT cannot simulta-

neously, allow SDI research and

be SDI-free zones. Professor of Computer Science

Joseph Weizenbaum said, "We

are testing the waters. Should we

not follow through with Germany, or should we

say 'no' to the military? . . . Hu-

man problems transcend techno-

logical solutions."

Press conference on SDI

Three professors also held a press conference earlier Saturday. The scientists explained the pro-

gram on technical, political and

economic grounds.

Edward Purcell, a Harvard

physicist who won the Nobel

Prize in Physics in 1952, said SDI

was put forth without any serious investigation. The offense retains

an enormous advantage because it costs ten times as much to de-

stroy a missile as to build a new one, he continued.

Purcell read a statement from his colleague Sheldon Glashow,

also a Nobel Laureate in Physics, who wrote, "I would give Star

Wars a 'D' because it is a danger to peace, a diminution to arms

control, deleterious to American science and it is destabilizing,

dumb and damned expensive."

Weizenbaum said he knew of very few computer professors who say SDI can be made to work. Scientists must do more than just say it will not work, he said. Scientists must also apply
clear social guidelines because of a "special responsibility to teach by our own example," he said.

The Soviets are scared of SDI now because of its offensive pow-
er, Weizenbaum continued.

Tuts resolved against SDI

The Tufts faculty adopted a resolution last month stating that participation in "Star Wars" is

inappropriate for the university. Over 2000 faculty at universi-

ties across the country have signed a pledge to refuse SDI re-

search projects, Goldstein said.

Weizenbaum added that MIT would be able to set an example for other universities to

follow by signing a similar reso-

ution.

The culture of science [at

MIT] is a very fragile system," said Sheldon Krimsky, profes-

sor of Urban Policy. "SDI makes a mockery of the peer review pro-

cess in science."

MIT should prohibit research which for security reasons could not go into public journals,

Krimsky proposed. "Can there still be SDI-free zones?" he

asked.

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