Column/Simson L. Garfinkel

Only locked doors will prevent thefts

Last Friday, my camera bag was stolen out of the Tech's Students' Center office. Inside the bag was a Nikon camera, several lenses, an autowinder and an 8mm projector film taken at the Freshman Picnic. Although the camera equipment is replaceable, the photographs are not.

This theft was not an isolated event this semester. Earlier this summer, another Tech staffer had his camera stolen out of his locked room in Senior House. Another locked room several doors down the hall was burglarized at the same time. A compact disc player was stolen from Baker House after a party during International Residence and Orientation Week.

The feeling among students is that these thefts have been by non-MIT people. We do not want to admit the possibility that the people we live with might be thieves. But even when we can trust the people we live with, by leaving our possessions out and our rooms unlocked we make it easier for intruders to steal from us.

Although MIT is an urban school with urban problems, many students here were raised in safer places. When an urban dweller might consider commissioning some actions, such as not walking down unit streets, are foreign to many others.

A few days ago, the MIT Campus Police distributed a special bulletin to East Campus and Senior House residents regarding these thefts. The bulletin notes that during the time period over 20 thefts between June and August, at least three of which were from locked rooms. It advises students to call the CP's emergency number (100) when strangers are seen entering dorms, wandering aimlessly or loitering in a dorm room or hallway, and to lock doors and windows when leaving a room, even if just for a few minutes. Some students have followed this advice all (Please turn to page 5)

To the Editor:

We respect the rights of individuals to express their opinions, but we must take issue with views outlined in the article "IBM policies aid apartheid regime" (April 25).

Your misleading headline is totally contradicted by IBM's demonstrated worldwide commitment to equal opportunity and affirmative action. We are disappointed that the author did not reflect in his letter the facts and viewpoints that were outlined in the article "IBM and the dynamics of apartheid," which every right-minded person should take time to read. IBM is working towards a society in which all people can work to the constraints of their abilities, and in which the differences aid apartheid are eliminated.

The letter ignores IBM's leadership role in challenging the underpinnings of apartheid. Instead, it promulgates simplistic solutions to very complex problems. Apartheid is a reprehensible system that every right-minded person wants to end. However, it is not likely to vanish without concerted efforts to change the social structure of South Africa.

We believe in present in South Africa plays a positive role in that process. IBM was a leader in desegregating workplaces and promoting opening offices to follow suit. We have promoted and funded housing programs that have given people a decent place to live. We have helped finance black businesses and worked to change laws that make it difficult to enter. For black enterprises to prosper.

The article failed to adequately credit IBM's education and training program efforts in South Africa. Education is one tool that will help spawn fundamental, positive changes. That is why, in the past ten years, IBM has contributed more than $10 million to education and training programs for black South Africans. In 1984 alone, we pledged more than $15 million to additional education programs and projects that foster legal reform and black enterprise.

We are aware that in a country such as South Africa, where the majority of people are black, few of our competitors are black. That is precisely why IBM and other enlightened companies operating in South Africa have gone beyond their business to the communities in the country.

We believe that such efforts do not support apartheid and will continue to invest in projects that directly benefit South Africans. Through research programs, IBM is contributing to the skills that will help black South Africans achieve their full potential, their just place in their society and their basic human rights to self-determination. We are committed to continue our efforts as long as we can maintain a sound business and, together with others, contribute to peaceful change.

While there are arguments about methods, there should be no argument about goals. All the people of South Africa will benefit when apartheid is ended. We would appreciate it if you would publish this letter so your readers are not misled by an incorrect characterization of IBM's role.

Bert Reinman
IBM Director
IBM Operations

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